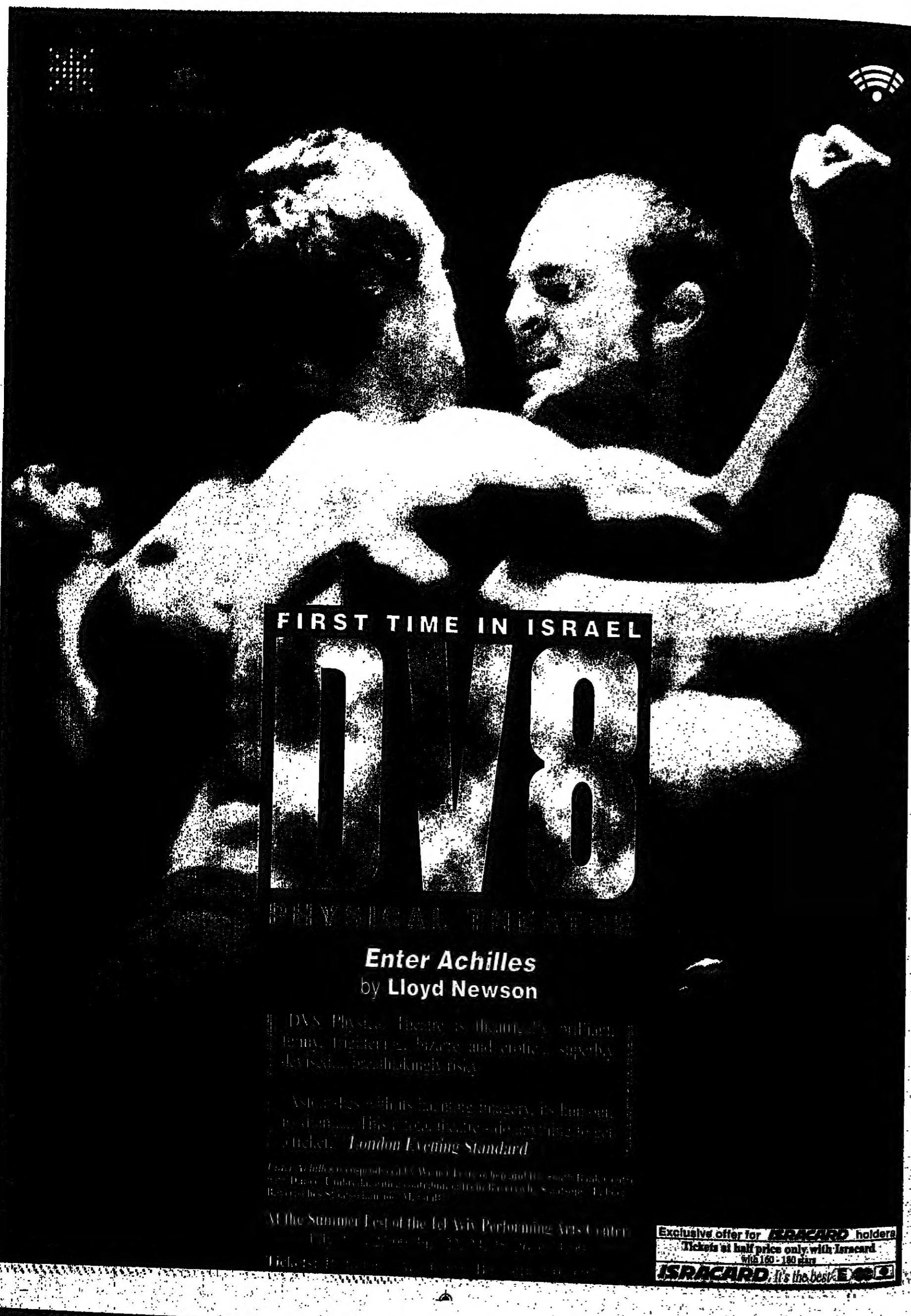


مكتبة الأهل



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July 14, 1995

THE JERUSALEM POST
MAGAZINE

FIGHTING SPIRIT

The kibbutz movements propose sweeping changes in the Nahal army program



THE JERUSALEM POST MAGAZINE

JULY 14, 1995
COVER PHOTO: JEREMY FELDMAN

- 8 UNSETTLED SOLDIERS**
Is the Nahal army unit falling out of step with the kibbutz movements?
By Sue Fishkoff
- 12 FEEL THE BURN**
Personal trainers are demanding, but they are a surefire way to become fit.
By Allison Kaplan Sommer
- 16 THE JEWS IN THE CROWN**
Nearly two millennia of Jewish presence in India are summed up in a colorful new Israel Museum exhibition. Star of the show is an exotic carved and painted 16th century synagogue rescued from Cochín.
By Meir Ronnen
- 20 SOUNDLESS IN GAZA**
A deaf child in the Gaza Strip used to be considered a shame to his parents. Now that is changing as the first school for the deaf in Gaza opens up a whole new world.
By Abraham Rabinovich

Departments

- 4 FAST FORWARD
23 BOOKS
28 TASTERS'S CHOICE
30 MARKETING WITH MARTHA
31 WITH PREJUDICE

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SPECIAL DELIVERY

ADHD CLARIFIED

I applaud Ruth Mason's article on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) ("The Gift of Clarification," May 19) and I feel that I must correct an impression made in the article by two misquotations.

The often-cited quote by me in the article "ADHD has become a terrible fad" was printed out of context. At a time when prevalence rates of ADHD range from 0.5 percent to 30 percent, and public opinion about this "syndrome" is driven by the mass media, it is imperative that professionals and parents be very careful regarding the identification, diagnosis and treatment of an individual with ADHD.

Actual prevalence rates in the general population (as measured in North and South America, Europe, Australia, Japan and China) range from 1.8 to 5 percent. Whenever we discuss a condition such as ADHD which is obviously being over-identified on a large scale, we can only liken the phenomenon to a "fad."

Certainly, in such a situation, caveat emptor: there are many "professionals" preying on parents and professionals that are in need of assistance. My warning, as printed in Mason's article, was certainly not designed to ignore the phenomenon, but rather to warn the general public. I am sorry for any other impression that may have been given.

Regarding Rivka Arotchay's statement that "these are kids who can't tell the difference between good and bad..." I have discussed this quote directly with Arotchay who states that what she actually said was "these are kids who can tell the difference between good and bad... they just don't know how to control themselves."

Indeed, research is very clear about impulsivity being a primary component of ADHD. June Levy, in her letter (June 23) raises the issue of dietary control to manage ADHD symptoms. Research on this point

is unclear; however, the intrusiveness and the expense of dietary controls of ADHD make these treatments untenable at best (and often less effective than medication).

This topic was not covered by any of the 150 researchers from 23 countries who participated in the International Conference on Research and Practice on Attention Deficit Disorders. There is a reason for this absence: virtually no controlled double-blind experiments have been able to consistently support the efficacy of dietary modifications.

As we have all been saying, caveat emptor.
Tom Gumpel, Ph.D.
The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Chair, International Conference on Research and Practice on Attention Deficit Disorders

FALSE ALARM

In "Audition Fever" (June 30) by Sue Fishkoff, there were several errors relating to the Israel Camerata in Rehovot.

The Camerata was founded 10 years ago by Avner Birn, who was and remains its musical director. The Camerata is funded by the Education Ministry, the city of Rehovot, and the Jewish Agency, with the largest share coming from the Education Ministry.

Only 1 percent of our budget comes from the Jewish Agency, hence there is no danger of closure in the absence of these funds.

We are currently selling subscriptions for the 1995-96 season and planning an overseas concert tour.
Ruth Brody
Manager
The Israel Camerata
Rehovot

TALENTED MUSICIANS
The article "Audition Fever" immediately caught my eye. Sue Fishkoff quite rightly points out the difficulties in finding employment encountered by the

many marvelously talented musicians from the former USSR who have settled in Israel.

I should like to tell your readers about a voluntary organization called She'arim Netanya, set up in 1990 by Rabbi Irvin Birnbaum in order to help settle new Russian immigrants. A major project of She'arim is the Monday Noontime Concerts which have been running without a break for the past four years, and we are now embarking on our fifth year of giving a weekly platform to many of the exceptionally outstanding Russian musicians who come to us from all over Israel.

Several of the violinists mentioned in Sue Fishkoff's article have performed at She'arim, and a number of "our" artists are now on the international circuit and have appeared on television. Our ever-increasing audiences are made up of tourists and loyal "regulars" who have come to expect and appreciate the enormously high standard of musicianship we present.

We try to keep our charges to the public low, and we pay the musicians as much as we possibly can, but it is never going to be commensurate with their talents. We are indebted to them, and we feel privileged to be able to help these wonderful musicians in our own small way, and they in return have enriched the musical culture of Netanya.
Jackie Altman
Co-chair, She'arim Music Committee
Netanya

CORRECTION

In "China's Whirlpool Decades" (July 7), US General George Marshall was misleadingly identified as "the retired World War I chief of staff." Marshall was sworn in as chief of staff on September 1, 1939, the day World War II began with the German invasion of Poland, and resigned in November 1945.
During World War I he served as chief of staff of the 8th army corps.

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the israel museum, jerusalem

EXHIBITIONS

The Jews of India



Focus on the lives of the three Jewish communities of India, including the interior of a 16th-century Cochin synagogue.
Micromegas from July 19
Contemporary artists manipulate scale in representing the human figure, animals, objects and landscapes.
Rita and Arturo Schwarz Collection of Israeli Art
Over 200 works by 30 artists, purchased especially for the Museum's 30th anniversary.
30x30: Thirty New Exhibits
Thirty first-time exhibits from the Museum's various departments for the 30th anniversary. Guided tours in English: Mon. and Wed. at 12:30.
New Acquisitions in Contemporary Art
Major works by Bill Viola, Hans Haacke, Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein and others in honor of the Museum's 30th anniversary.

Samaritan Mosaic Floor

4th century CE, discovered in El Kibbe.

Galia Berger
A selection of gouache stage designs and costume sketches for Israel's theaters.

Petra in the News
Objects and coins testifying to Petra's prosperity.

Islamic Art
Inlaid metalwork - 13-15 cent. and illustrations of the Shahname, Iran and India, 14-18 cent.

My Way - Tim Gidal, Photographer
Works of the pioneer photographer who helped change the face of modern photo-journalism from the 1920s on.

Heroes: Past and Present
The image and place in our lives of a hero, with activities in the Ruth Youth Wing.

The Crucified Man from Givat Hamivtar
Discovery of a crucified man from the Roman era, together with a replica of his head bones placed by an iron nail.

At the Rockefeller Museum
Martin Szekely, French Designer
Designs, photos and drawings by one of the most lauded contemporary designers.

TICHO HOUSE

Anna Ticho - Judean Hills, 1970s

Sun., Mon., Wed., Thur. 10-6; Tue. 10-10; Fri. 10-2

Story-telling Theater. Ages 4-8. Sun. 4:30 p.m.

Library: Sun.-Thur. 10-6, Fri. 10-12

Coffee Shop: Sun.-Thur. 10 a.m. to midnight; Fri. 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.; Sat. night, till midnight.

On the Road to Edom

Discoveries from a 7th-6th century BCE Edomite shrine at Ein Hatzeva.

Guided tours in English: Mon. and Wed. at 12:30.

1930s Tel Aviv Film Posters

A selection of movie posters of "Little Tel Aviv" 1928-34, for the motion picture centennial.

YOUTH WING

Tue., July 18:

4:30 p.m.: Story Hour with Michal And.

6:30 p.m.: Heroes, Inc. Show in the exhibition with Rita Padua and musical accompaniment.

6:30 p.m.: The Magic of Maurice Ben-Dek with Carol Kaplan (in English). Ages 7+.

Library and Foliolet Recycling Room:

Sun., Mon., Wed., Thur. 2-5 p.m.; Tue. 4-7 p.m.

Story Hours: ages 4-7

Tue. 4:30 (Heb.); Wed. 4 p.m. (Eng.)

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

CONCERTS: Performance by Immigrant musicians.

Fri., July 14, 11 a.m., Ticho House.

Pavel Talaganov - violin; Michael Talaganov - viola;

Anna Galaganov - piano; Mozart, Telemann.

Dance to live music from the 60's with the Standards Orchestra.

Sat., July 15, 9:30 p.m. Pello.

LECTURE: Jews in the Hindu World by Dr. Shalva Weil.

Hebrew University. Tue., July 18, 8 p.m. Auditorium (in Hebrew).

GALLERY TALK: The Rita and Arturo Schwarz Collection of Israeli Art by Shlomit Steinberg. Tue., July 18, 7 p.m. (in Hebrew).

MOVIES: Four Weddings and a Funeral (1994, 117 min.).

Dir: Mike Newell, with Hugh Grant, Andie MacDowell. Witby and sophisticated comedy. July 15, 18 and 20, 9 p.m. Auditorium.

Painting the Paintings with Music with famed saxophonist, Amy Lawrence. Wed., July 20, 9 p.m.; Jam session 10 p.m.

August 3 - Kite Festival, aerobics and workshops 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.

GUIDED TOURS IN ENGLISH

Meet at Main Building Information Desk for

Museum Highlights: Sun., Mon., Wed., Thur. 11 a.m. & 3 p.m.

Fri. 11 a.m., Tue. 4:30 p.m.

Archaeological Galleries: Mon., Thur. 2 p.m.

Judaica & Ethnography: Sun., Wed., 2 p.m.

Shrine of the Book: At Shrine entrance

Sun., Mon., Wed., Thur. 1:30 p.m.; Tue. 3 p.m.; Fri., 12:45 p.m.

Meet at Entrance Pavilion Information Desk for tours to:

German Sun., 2 p.m. French Sun., 11 a.m.

Rockefeller Museum: Sun., 11 a.m.

VISITING HOURS

Sun., Mon., Wed., Thur. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tue. 4 p.m.-10 p.m.

Shrine of the Book also open Tue. 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. Fri. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Sat. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Information: 708811.

FAST FORWARD

OUT THERE

When to hold and when to fold: from collecting

By Haim Chertok

Among the constellation of minor planets that tilted my path toward Israel, Robert S. McNamara, secretary of defense under JFK and LBJ, glows faintly but distinctly.

It was in March of 1964 that he announced that the Defense Department was seriously thinking about activating reserve units for duty in Vietnam. Only two months earlier, after two years of service in the Far East, I had been discharged and assigned to an inactive unit in Oakland, California.

Weighing alternatives, I very soon made it over from Berkeley to check out a place called the Ah-lay-yah Center in San Francisco. What sort of Zionist was I at the time? In truth, no sort: aliya would take me another 12 years.

But for me McNamara's threat incarnated Israel as an option.

What brings this to mind? Retrospect, McNamara's new, well-received account of blunder, blindness and delayed repentance, describes the incapacity of the inner ruling circle to admit error, cut losses, and break off America's misconceived adventure. For more than a decade, "crying uncle" at Uncle Ho was viewed as un-American, unmasculine, immoral, intolerable. I despised McNamara.

Thirty years down the line, his "mea culpa" has triggered an unexpected retrospective tangent of my own. In matters great and small, once committed to a course, I often scruple outrageously at the prospect of aborting it.

Some years ago I filed a column about what seemed discordant abuse of "problematic" in place of simple old, adjectival "problem," as in "a problem child." To this day the triumphal march of "problematic," sweeping in its

wake both unregenerate "problem" and weak-kneed "problematical,"

A few months ago, I was constrained to listen to a certain

riveted to orientate administrate pressurized problematic finalize

panjandrum venting frustration at having to administrate a program with the halfhearted support of her colleagues. Minutes later she grumbled about being pressurized

by events beyond her control. Administrate? Ministers don't

that administrators censed to administer? Pressurized? Had her nerves vaporized like helium in a canister, her brains melted like spuds in a steam cooker? Were these clumsy Britishisms? Without my knowing, had verbal pressure taken a powder, regularized into oblivion? Will future glossaries designate "circa 1995" for its demise?

SUDDENLY MY interest, which early on had peaked, piqued afresh. What a freshest of linguistic infelicity was my interlocutor! Heaven only knew what waltz clunker the very next sentence might deliver. Notwithstanding that my peevishness over problematic had scored all the impact of a pebble on the moon, an idea was born for another word column.

So that evening I took a new bite on my Apple, thereby committing myself to the project,

and in the ensuing weeks my ear cocked to wind. The most

Yet although my list slowly grew, it proved recalcitrant straw that resisted all my efforts to be translated into gold. Why did I not just drop the project?

No, like one of McNamara's raggle-taggle band, I was determined that fruit would grow from this compost. Not until *Retrospect* did I grasp that I really did not want to pose as another self-appointed guardian at Webstergate, a jaundiced janissary who commentates, ironizes, sarcasmifies, and registers measured alarm over the dismal triumphs of "finalize" and "riveted to." Let it go, man! Dump orientate and feeling pressurized by a false start.

That night, the deed was done! The file was erased, a slate wiped clean. I had become Thoreau's "new man." Item: Disencumbering myself of an ancient reading habit, after 300 pages, I put aside the remaining 700 pages of Holroyd's *Life of Lytton Strachey*. Just because I started it, did I have to finish the damn thing? Of course not. I knew enough about poor Strachey to last several lifetimes.

COVERED IN McNamara Sauce, a new me has been set loose. Item: Five years ago I happened to comment to Ruti, a clerk at the post office in Yeroham, about the loveliness of a new series of stamps that celebrated wildlife in the country's nature reserves. It had been 35 years since I collected stamps, but taken by that series, I spontaneously purchased its first-day covers.

Following that initial step, I purchased first-day covers of the next issue of stamps. And the next, Ruti began putting them aside for me. What had begun as a fluid impulse had hardened into an obligation, a "hobby." After two years the joy had flown, but the die was cast. Until last week.

"Ruti, I don't want any more first-day covers," I declared. "My drawer is stuffed with them. It's over."

Ruti looked confused, then disappointed, but still she seemed to acquiesce. Yesterday, she tempted me anew. Yes, they were lovely stamps, and yes, I momentarily wavered until, manfully, I regathered my forces. "Enough. It's time I quit. No more first-day covers."

How ruthlessly simple! For want of such resolution, did 50,000 American soldiers, did hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese have to lose their lives?

The difficulty, of course, is that it's always easier to sense when to hold and when to fold in retrospect. Nevertheless, especially in our body politic, where so many problematic matters are labeled "unthinkable" or "inconceivable," perhaps this clear-sighted expedient could save us considerable annoyance, self-reproach, or even grief in our retrospective years. Ask Robert S. McNamara.

GUARANTEED PLAY NON-SCIENTIFIC

Mivchan America'i!

by G. H. Freedman

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THE WORD KOOTER?

- A. A whiner. A complainer. B. A handy person about the house. C. A bird with an unusually loud squawk. D. A motorcyclist. A kfar Saba's Angel.

IS IT A WHINER?



How am I? OY, don't ask! Well, if you really want to know, I get up this morning, I find the fridge is on the blink. OY, don't ask! How do you like Hagen-Dazs songs? Hey, is it hot enough for ya? I can't even get to the pool today... OY, don't ask! The sitter cancelled at the last minute. Hey now, not too short there in the back, hon, okay?

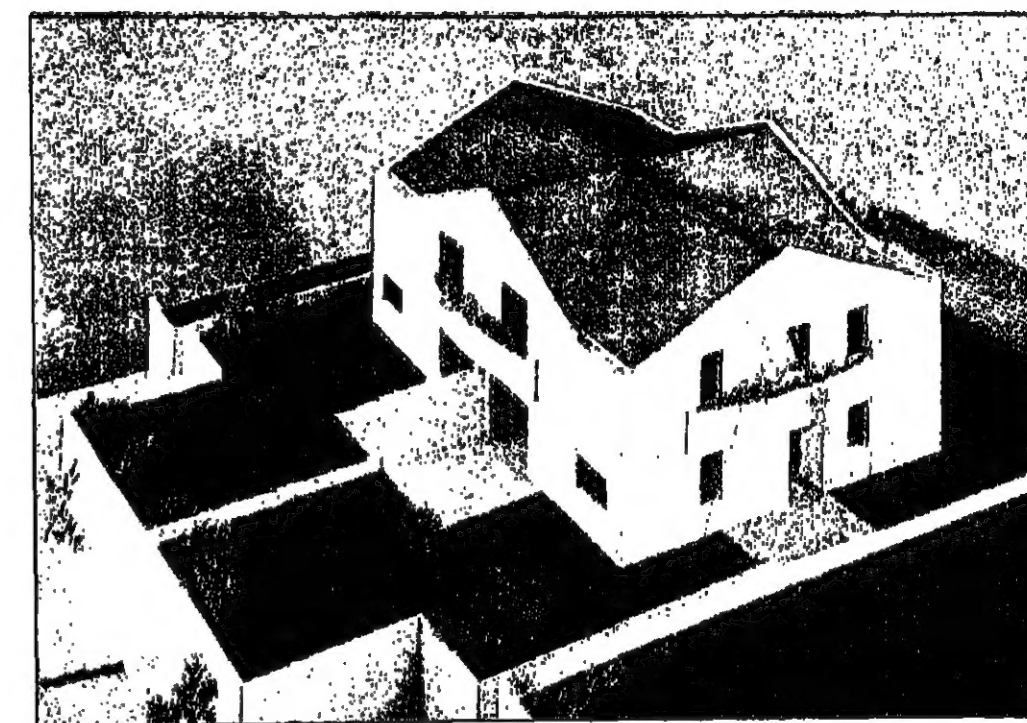
KOOTER

is A: a complainer or whiner. A female complainer (see Fig. 1 above) would be called, actually, a "kooterest." That's what you could call me, for instance, if I started to tell you how much my hand is killing me from drawing so much, but, hey, don't ask...

You are invited to join the dozens of families that have already bought an enchanting cottage at Nofei Aviv - lawyers, doctors, engineers, hi-tech professionals, and others, who have forged the character of the neighborhood. They have chosen to live and bring up their children in a relaxed, rustic atmosphere, where the quality of life is high.

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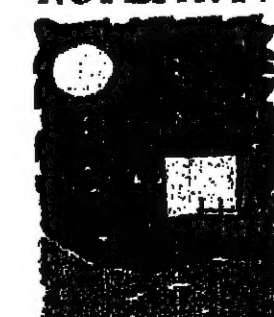


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The man who's been everywhere brings a kosher meal wherever he goes

By Allison Kaplan Sommer

There is nothing like the excitement of planning a trip overseas: poring over maps, figuring out where to stay in London, which museums to see first in Florence or where to go in Singapore or Thailand.

But for religiously observant travelers, there are more basic concerns that have to be worked out first. Will there be kosher food available? If so, who is certifying it? Is there a hotel within walking distance of a synagogue? And how can Shabbat be dealt with in a place with elevators and those electronic keys used to open the rooms?

These are the anxious questions with which people come to Yossi Glick. And usually, the friendly 49-year-old grandfather provides an answer that can relieve them and help them focus on sightseeing instead of logistics.

It was 15 years ago that tour operator Natour began their

"Natour Masoret" division — a special wing of the business offering organized tours that cater to the religious public. Glick first stumbled into being a tour guide when someone recommended him to the founding father of the division, Efraim Holberg. As a former Bnei Akiva youth leader,



commander in the army, and a teacher in Kfar Habad, Glick had a solid track record of working with people. But travel experience?

"The closest I gotten had been going to Ben-Gurion Airport and watching the planes take off," says Glick, who heads the

department today. "My preparation for the first trip was someone showing me Europe on a map, pointing to where the kosher restaurants were, and sending me on my way."

That first taste of travel was enough for Glick to catch the bug. He continued as a tour guide, specializing in "opening" new destinations for religious travel. During the past decade, he has led groups to Scandinavia, Turkey, Thailand, China, Singapore and across South America.

He is currently organizing Natour Masoret's first foray into Indonesia. Going into a new country is a tricky operation: organizing the kosher food, making sure that Indonesian customs won't give them any problems bringing it in, checking if the hotel they are staying in will let them use the kitchen.

"In places where there is no kosher food, we just take our food from Israel, take our utensils from Israel and prepare the meals in the kitchen like a cook," he says, pointing to pictures of himself in a chef's hat, whipping up dinner.

USUALLY, however bringing everything from home is not necessary. In Europe, for instance, they have made a deal with a kosher catering company in London, which supplies them with as many ready-made kosher meals as they want, delivered to any European destination they request. In other places, they work with local kosher restaurants and markets that can provide them with staples: there is one in Thailand, two in Hong Kong, and several in Mexico.

In cajoling hotels to cooperate with their special needs, interpersonal skills are just as important as culinary ones. Ironically, he says, in the more exotic locations like China it is easiest to explain the customs of kashrut.

"I tell them that this is a group with a special philosophy of life and they will eat only this particular food with these particular ritual plastic utensils. They understand that; they don't ask questions, they accept it. The Turks, because they have a Middle Eastern attitude, are also open and friendly — 'Sure, come in the kitchen, do whatever you want,' they say."

"On the other hand, in Europe and the US, they are tough, they have their system, they're not as flexible. It's much harder to get a hotel there to let you use their kitchen."

Glick, of course, arranges with



Yossi Glick: Someone who loves going to the same destination for the 100th time.

the front desk ahead of time for porters to press buttons or open electric locks on Shabbat, and makes sure that his clients stay on low floors. "The biggest problem is when floor one is really the sixth floor!"

He sees the restrictions of Shabbat as a plus while traveling. "For the nonreligious, Shabbat is just another day on a bus, seeing the sights through the window. The religious, first of all, go to synagogue, meet members of the local Jewish community. That's an experience in itself, to see their style of prayer, their unique customs, that sometimes reflect hundreds of years of tradition."

"And they spend the day wandering around, on the street, seeing the people close up. If they were driving around to destinations they wouldn't do that."

SO WHERE does the man who's been everywhere recommend going? Glick is a big fan of South America, and his favorite spot is the Amazonas region. His favorite city is on the same continent: Rio de Janeiro, though "architecturally speaking, Prague is the most beautiful city in the world."

For those looking for the most

impressive sights from a Jewish historical point of view, Rome, and many of the ancient cities in Spain, can't be matched. "These are the places that attract Jews, particularly religious Jews. They are not just trips, you really feel a connection to the places."

But honestly, doesn't the most fascinating site lose something when you are standing there explaining its historical significance to a group for the 100th time?

Glick shakes his head emphatically. "If you are someone who truly loves to work with people, you can get to the same place for the 100th time and explain something for the 100th time, you see the interest in their eyes and how intently they are listening to you. Every time it will give you a good feeling and will feel like something worth doing."

END NOTES

Nahal
Acronym for No'ar Halutz Lohem (Pioneer Fighting Youth)

First Bnei Akiva yeshiva
established by Nahal group on the Golan Heights (Ramal Hlpin) 1973

First Nahal site in the territories
handed over to settlers since the onset of the intifada (Shima'h) July 13, 1988

Cornerstone laid at Pardes Hanna
in memory of 874 Nahal soldiers who fell in Israel's wars November 1987

Percentage of Nahal soldiers
who eventually become kibbutz members
Less than 20

Compiled by Kelly Hartog

ALL ABOUT



Skyline

Doby Tal and Motti Haremetz's collection of 190 aerial photographs over Israel takes the reader to places that were once only accessible to air enthusiasts. The photo angles and use of light show Israel in a new perspective both graphic and artistic in nature. Hardcover 208 pp. plus index.

JP Price NIS 79.00
(Overseas Airmail NIS 120.00)



Jerusalem of the Heavens

Moshe Milner and Yehuda Salomon set out and discover the most distinctive sites and photographic angles in Jerusalem. Every photograph, presented in brilliant color, is taken from the air or an elevated vantage point, providing an intimate look at the Holy City and its people. Large format, hardcover, 182 pp. Aile.

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Jerusalem Man and Stone

Meir Ben-Dov presents a brilliant survey of Israel's turbulent multi-millennia past; its archeology and architecture; its contemporary revival and restoration; its population groups; and the pulse of inner city life. Highly informative text is complemented with over 20 years of photography. Hardcover, 288 pp.

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Off the Beaten Track In Israel

On Davir takes you to a special selection of Israel's beautiful places: water sites, hills, desert, seashore, archaeological finds and more... some accessible from the road, others only by foot. Ideal for both the amateur traveler or active out and about explorers. Maps to each site provided and color illustrations. Hardcover, 200 pp.

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Map of Israel Posters

Road Map - Up-to-date, including all new towns and roads as well as historical and holy sites. Reverse side includes an index of cities, towns and places of interest. PVC laminated clear finish. Size 35 x 69 cm. Scale: 1:400,000. Printed in English.

JP Price NIS 33.00
(Overseas Airmail NIS 38.00)



Satellite Map - The color data was derived from the US LANDSAT-5 satellite which passed over Israel at a height of 880 miles on January 16, 1987. Black and white data enhancement was provided by the French SPOT IMAGE satellite. The final result is a true-color high-resolution image of Israel from Mt. Hermon to Eilat with surrounding areas. Hanging size: 47W x 135L cm. (19 x 54 in.)

JP Price NIS 41.00
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SCENE AND HEARD

One boss-lady whose shoes will be hard to fill

By Allison Kaplan Sommer

Well, it is just appalling. A figure of vast cultural influence is leaving the country, and many a word about it in the press. Definitely journalistic irresponsibility at its height.

This omission must be corrected. So at the risk of self-indulgence, let us take this opportunity for the *Jerusalem Post Magazine* staff to bowell the departure this week of its fearless leader, Faye Bittker.

Faye has invested her heart, her soul, her irrepresible personality and all of her tall blondeness into her job as editor of these pages for the past four years.

Even as she has changed the *Magazine*, those who worked with her have watched her evolve as well. She came to the *Post* as a carefree single girl from Tel Aviv, and today finds herself a Jerusalemite respectfully married to a nice Jewish lawyer.

Her husband, Arie Rudnick, is so respectable, in fact, that the Philadelphia Jewish community have seen fit to dispatch him to the US as an emissary to spread the joys of Jewish identity and love for Israel far and wide.

In true Bill-and-Hillary-Clinton style, Philly is getting two for the price of one, as Faye comes with the package. (Like Hillary, Faye went to Wellesley, bakes cookies and experiments with her hairstyle. But she has much better taste in clothes.)

We know that we'll miss Faye and we're sure her readers will too — particularly those who are her regular correspondents and callers

who have taken it upon themselves to survey her work for errors.

"Another nail in the coffin of the Jewish people," one angry reader wrote in reaction to the time she made the historic error of accidentally leaving a dairy ingredient in a chicken recipe. (Does the Jewish Agency know about this?) And maybe during her time in the US, she'll be able to



hunt down and send over some of the ingredients readers complained were impossible to find locally.

For her colleagues and friends, the only bright spot in Faye's departure is the fact that it is only a three-year stint. (Sounds like *Star Trek*...) "their three-year mission — to discover new forms of Jewish life and fight assimilation. To boldly go where no Jewish couple has gone before."

So as we usher Faye onto the plane and as Carl Schrag steps into her (size 13) boots, we comfort ourselves in the knowledge that she is not quitting the *Post*, but has only embarked on a leave of absence, albeit lengthy. Therefore, we won't say words like "shalom" or "goodbye." Instead it is "Philra" or — Illi we meet again. And good luck, too.

RAINDROPS KEEP FALLING

"Rains this late
in July happen even
less frequently."

When talking about the week's rain, the weatherman noted that there have not been summer showers since June 1987. The Jerusalem Post, July 14, 1988

UNSETTLED SOLDIERS

Is the Nahal army unit falling out of step with the kibbutz movements?

By Sue Fishkoff

Photos: Jeremy Feldman

Nahal, the Pioneer Fighting Youth unit of the IDF, made headlines three weeks ago, when a Knesset subcommittee on defense and foreign affairs proposed turning it from a settlement-oriented force into just a combat unit. It wasn't the first time someone has proposed disbanding Nahal. As far back as 1972, top IDF officers told reporters the unit had outlived its purpose.

But today it's the kibbutz movements themselves that are proposing sweeping changes in the Nahal program that would drop the settlement stage of the unit's military service and replace it with a host of social-service activities.

"When [MK] Hagai Merom says that Nahal is not relevant, he's right," says Yossi Mizrahi, head of youth settlement for the United Kibbutz Movement. "In its present state, it hasn't been answering the real needs of the state for more than 10 years."

"Once, we believed that settlement and security were inextricably linked. Today, settling the border is perhaps less significant from a security standpoint. None of these outposts has become a permanent civilian settlement for the past decade. These nice, young kids come to Nahal, spend a few months on kibbutz and then move on. It's a waste of energy for the youngsters, for the kibbutz movement, and for the state, and it costs millions of shekels."

According to the proposed UKM plan, male Nahal soldiers would have the option, after the year of voluntary social work, of either serving 24 months in a Nahal combat unit followed by another 12 months of social work, or serving 36 months in a combat unit followed by two months working on the group's host kibbutz.

"In the past five or six years, our kibbutzim have stopped requesting Nahal groups," Mizrahi says. "They have to invest a lot of money and energy in each group, and very few Nahal soldiers stay on the kibbutz afterwards."

"Very often, the opposite happens. They marry our young people and take them off the kibbutz."

The Kibbutz Artzi Movement, which sponsors the Hashomer Hatza'ir youth movement, also supports abandoning the settlement stage of Nahal service, and replacing that eight-month period with social work in development towns, absorption centers and the youth movement, or work on an existing border kibbutz.

"We want to see big changes in Nahal," says Martin Ben-Moreh, head of Artzi's youth movement department. "It has to answer the real needs of Israeli society in the 1990s."

But Artzi does not want to weaken the connection between Nahal groups and Artzi kibbutzim.

"Artzi still believes, more than the UKM,



Members of Garin Paltas are strongly motivated by ideology and want to 'help build a new society.'

that Nahal continues to provide a constant source of new members for border kibbutzim. Ben-Moreh says there is no drop in the number of Artzi kibbutzim requesting Nahal groups, because their experience with these groups is good, and many ex-Nahal soldiers stay on Artzi kibbutzim.

The conflict is rooted in differing conceptions of Nahal's primary goal. The kibbutz movements tend to look at how Nahal groups can best help existing kib-

butzim — emphasizing the "pioneer" part of the unit's name — while the Nahal command is more focused on military, or security exigencies — stressing the "fighting" half of the Nahal title.

Nahal was established in 1948, the same year as the state. Its mission was to provide a military force for border settlements, ensuring security on the country's periphery while continuing the kibbutz way of life. Nahal soldiers spend more than a year — the female soldiers, almost

two years — of their military service working on host kibbutzim and/or establishing border outposts. To date, more than 160 civilian settlements, most of them kibbutzim, have been founded by Nahal groups. But Nahal recruitment has been in a downward spiral for more than a decade. The country's youth movements, the traditional breeding ground for Nahal, are less active every year. With the kibbutz movement itself in disarray, fewer kibbutzim are requesting Nahal groups, according to

UKM records. Until last month's reestablishment of Kibbutz Ravid in Galilee, no new kibbutzim had been founded in nearly a decade.

Even so, young people are still choosing to join Nahal. After a long, steady drop in enrollment, Doron Tondovsky, head of the Department of Youth and Nahal at the Defense Ministry, reports that last winter's entering group represented a 25 percent increase over the previous season.

"We had 850 boys and girls register for Nahal, making up 20 groups going to 20 different settlements, plus a unit of kibbutz kids heading to Nahal officers' courses," he says with pride. "It's the first time our numbers are up in 15 years."

Much of that increase is no doubt due to Nahal's changing recruitment strategies. More than two years ago, Nahal organizers began building settlement groups of city youngsters who did not grow up together in a youth movement. Today, he says, about half of all Nahal groups are "mixed" this way.

In addition, for more than six years, young people have been allowed to join Nahal as individuals, not attached to a settlement group. These soldiers follow a different military service route than Nahal group members, which does not include time on kibbutzim. Tondovsky estimates that this new kind of Nahal member represents one-third of today's Nahal force.

Recruitment changes made by Tondovsky's office have brought more young soldiers to Nahal. But the changes have sparked controversy with the kibbutz movements, who say the quality of Nahal soldiers has suffered. In the last two to three years, there have been well-publicized cases of drug use and theft among members of Nahal groups; some of the cases have ended up in court.

In turn, the kibbutz movements are proposing their own revisions of the Nahal program, which are not favored by the Nahal leadership.

Last month, a UKM committee studying the problem released its proposal for changes in Nahal. The most sweeping suggested change is dropping the settlement phase of Nahal service entirely. Instead of finishing basic training and going off for eight months to settle a new border outpost, the UKM plan proposes that each group give a year of voluntary service before the army, in either education or youth movement work, followed by a regular, uninterrupted tour of military duty.

According to Nahal records, as of January 1995, 18 percent of Nahal graduates remained on their host kibbutzim after their military service. The kibbutz movements have different numbers. The UKM's Mizrahi says the number of Nahal graduates staying on kibbutz is "close to zero." Ben-Moreh, on the other hand, says that "many" ex-Nahal soldiers stay on Artzi kibbutzim. He says that 25 young people from his kibbutz's last group are still living there, more than half the total.

Virtually all the Nahal groups on Artzi kibbutzim come from its youth movement, Hashomer Hatza'ir. "It's a conscious decision," Ben-Moreh explains. "We want quality people, who really want to try this way of life."

"We're trying to make Nahal more viable, more responsive to what people want, not water it down," says Ben-Moreh. "Instead of [the Knesset subcommittee] saying Nahal is finished, they should find a way to reinvest it with meaning and new challenges."

If the kibbutz movements think that Nahal's goal should no longer be settlement, "then they're completely mistaken," insists Tondovsky.

The eight-month border-outpost period is an essential part of the national security plan, until the government decides otherwise, he says.

"For us in the Defense Ministry, it's important to strengthen border settlements with young people who will continue the path of the first kibbutz settlers and

strengthen the presence of the people of Israel on the territory of the State of Israel," he says.

And it's precisely this period in their military service — the excitement and challenge of building a new communal settlement — that attracts many young people, both city kids and youth-movement veterans, to Nahal.

Eli Carmeli, 18, from Hadera, is a member of Garin Shohan, 48 pre-army kids from greater Tel Aviv area towns organized into a "city" settlement group last November by the Nahal's education department. The group goes to Kibbutz Tzova, in the Jerusalem hills, in September, and its first members begin basic training next January.

Carmeli, an articulate young man, says that at first he thought he'd volunteer to be part of the 20 percent of his group sent to the Nahal commanders' course.

"Then I found out I'd have to give up the border-settlement period, and I decided not to go to the course," he says. "One of the most important things for me is [this period]. One of the main values of Nahal, the way I see it, is to settle these places on the border. That's why I joined."

"We're city kids, and it's a tremendous experience to come and settle a new kibbutz," chimes in Meital Elies, a fellow group member from Petah Tikva. "We'll have commanders there watching us, but from the side. It'll really be us running our own show."

"After a year of being apart from the rest of the group [during the men's first stage of military duty], we're all looking forward to that period of being together again," adds Anat Shitreet, also of Petah Tikva. "The border settlement period is what attracted me to Nahal."

Some of the men in the group, whose low medical profiles preclude their joining a combat unit, view Nahal as a way of allowing them still to serve in positions they consider prestigious.

"I have a low profile, and if I went to the army the regular way, I'd probably spend three years as a clerk," says Oren Binyamin from Petah Tikva. "I'm looking for something more interesting than just sitting in an office."

There have been a lot of complaints from within the kibbutz movement about these new, "city" settlement groups.

Because they are not made up of youth movement kids, critics say, they don't share the same collective values as traditional groups, and are more likely to cause trouble and drop out of Nahal.

In one sense, the criticism is justified. The young members of Garin Shohan mention "doing the army together" as their primary goal, more often than "building kibbutz" or "living communal values."

In fact, according to Nahal staffers, youth-movement groups are just as likely to break up as groups from the city. And the members of Shohan insist that because they chose to come together, their commitment to each other is that much stronger.

"In the beginning, we didn't come together because of a specific shared ideology, like a youth movement group," says Ori Gal of Kfar Sava. "But slowly, over time, shared values emerged: friendship, caring, working together. Each time we spent a weekend on our target kibbutz, we got closer."

Even calling them "city settlement groups" is a misnomer. Tondovsky says that 80 percent of the youngsters in these groups spent years in a youth movement before leaving in their high-school years.



Tali Rusak worked on a kibbutz instead of in a city. 'In terms of jobs for girls, Nahal is not as interesting.'

A DISAPPOINTING CHOICE

It's Revah of Tel Aviv, and Orly Salam and Dahan Gayer of Herzliya, all began their Nahal service in 1984. Revah was part of a Hashomer Hatza'ir group (group) from Holon that went to Kibbutz Lahav, while Salam and Gayer were from a non-movement group that went to a new moshav on the Golan Heights. Salam says that if she were going into the army now, she would not choose Nahal.

"If Nahal's goal was really to help society, I'd support it," she says. "But my Nahal group was sent to a moshav instead of to a development town, which really needs help. I'd rather have been a teacher or tour guide in the army, or a social worker in a development town."

Salam suggests that the Nahal route may be out of step with today's youth. "Kibbutz life demands that you give a lot to the group, but in today's world, people are more individualistic," she says. "Modern values are not suited to the Nahal framework. Nahal must find a new way to encourage the maximum contribution to society."

Revah says she was happy with her first period of Nahal service when the group lived together on kibbutz. But she wishes she had left Nahal at that point, and gone to a special course not connected to Nahal, so she could "make a more significant contribution."

Gayer says she would certainly do Nahal again, but he also

believed that the Nahal experience was more challenging for men than for women. He points to his experience of his own Nahal service, where he went out with the main combat training while Salam and the other women went back to Kibbutz Lahav on the moshav.

"The girls wasted their time while the boys were helped a lot by doing Nahal," he says. "The Nahal leadership needs to find a more interesting route for the girls."

As a combat soldier, Gayer says, he can admit that he was established with the other soldiers in his group was invaluable. "When you're doing a hard physical task, like carrying someone on a stretcher for many kilometers up a mountain, there's always your group leader beside you, telling you, 'As much as the combat training experience brings soldiers together, the Nahal experience brings you even closer.' We had the nice feeling of being a unit within a unit."

Gayer feels that the "city settlement groups" have "ruined" Nahal. "Once you take a group and add 20 guys who don't know each other, the motivation goes away down."

Gayer is sure that the United Kibbutz Movement program, whereby groups would go to the same kibbutz for three years of military service and then have the option of returning to their home kibbutz for a two-month period, will fail. "You see the guys who don't point," he says.

Garin Shoham fits that profile: Five of seven members interviewed were in youth movements as children. Parental influence is also germane. Six out of the seven had parents who were youth-movement graduates, and four had parents who were in Nahal.

Still, city groups have a bad name on kibbutz. Some kibbutzim have had such unpleasant experiences with recent non-movement Nahal groups that they have refused to take any more.

Amos Giur, a member of the Nahal group that founded Kibbutz Ein Gedi in 1956, says that the kibbutz's experience with its last group several months ago was "not successful." Although 35 percent of Ein Gedi's 250 members are Nahal graduates, he doubts the kibbutz will take another group.

"There is a different kind of person in Nahal today," he says. "It's not like it used to be, people who wanted to build something and live a shared life, people with idealism and values. I don't know whether we'll take any more Nahal groups, but I can tell you that after this experience, we won't be enthusiastic about it."

It's difficult for kibbutz members, many of whom are themselves former Nahal soldiers, to criticize Nahal too severely, and they tend to talk about "lack of motivation" or "unsuccessful absorption" rather than say the units are filled with "good-for-nothings."

Kibbutz Dafna, on the other hand, was quite pleased with the non-movement

Nahal group it hosted from last August through this March. The 34 members of Garin Har Etzel were recruited through Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel clubs, and were specifically chosen for their desire to live on kibbutz.

"They worked hard and gave the kibbutz a lot in terms of culture and education," says kibbutz secretary Lilit Harel. "They ran classes and helped our kids with their work after school. We certainly hope they'll keep up their connection with us during the army and return later to Dafna."

Kibbutz Nirim, one of 11 kibbutzim near the Gaza Strip founded on the eve of Yom Kippur 1946, has many Nahal graduates among its 200 members. Large Nahal groups came to the kibbutz in 1956, '65, '74 and '80, continually infusing the kibbutz with new blood.

Today, a small city group in the middle of its military service lives on the kibbutz, as well as the 37 Hashomer Hatzair kids of Garin Psifas, who have spent the last year on Nirim before their basic training begins at the end of this month.

In line with current Hashomer Hatzair thinking, most of this group spent the year doing volunteer social work in development towns, poor neighborhoods and caravan sites, returning to Nirim only on weekends.

"We put off our military service for a year to do this work, because we think it's important," explains Ze'ev Golan, 19, of Kiryat Haim. "We're not ashamed to say

we want to be involved in social change, even if that's not a very popular attitude today. We want to contribute, especially to the next generation. Whatever is important at the time - immigrant absorption, education work in poor neighborhoods - that's where we want to serve, in addition to our military service."

Sandra Zisser, from Kiryat Ats, spent the past year as a Hashomer Hatzair counselor in Jerusalem. "For me, Nahal is a bet-

'We want to see big changes in Nahal. It has to answer the real needs of Israeli society in the 1990s.'

- Martin Ben-Moreh, Kibbutz Artzi Movement

ter, more fulfilling way to do the army," she says. "The year of voluntary service is an indispensable part of it. It's very important for me to continue passing on my values to youngsters through education."

The members of Garin Psifas are strong-

ly motivated by ideology. Their speech is peppered with Hashomer Hatzair buzzwords such as "our mission," "the group," "settling the land" and "shared values."

They view their Nahal duty in national, historic terms, speaking about how they want to "help build a new society" and "settle the country's periphery," much more than how Nahal might help them grow as individuals. All of them see Nahal as the logical extension of their youth-movement experience. In this, they differ from their peers in Garin Shoham.

"In the movement, we learned about the values of equality, collectivity, the communal life, but we just spoke about it," says Alon Bader, 19, also of Kiryat Haim. "Now, in order to find out whether these are the values we want in our own lives, we go to Nahal. Nahal isn't the end of the path; it's the key to our future."

"We chose Nahal because we want to act, not just take from society," says Golan. "We are ideological and not afraid to say so. Nahal is for young people who want to confront life, and not just take it as it comes. It's a national mission, which gives young people a way to contribute to society in a way they feel is meaningful, like through kibbutz."

The women in Garin Psifas admit that Nahal gives them fewer job opportunities than the regular army. What's more important for them, they say, is the experience of doing the army together with their friends.

"We were together for many years in the movement, and I want to continue with the group," says Tali Rusak, 19. She is one of the group members who worked on the kibbutz this past year instead of in a city or caravan site. "In terms of jobs for girls, Nahal is not as interesting."

The members agree that the most important part of their Nahal service will be the period they spend settling a new border outpost, because that's where they will begin to decide whether kibbutz life is for them.

They also agree, however, that they would prefer to replace that eight-month period of military settlement with a year of civilian settlement. Some Hashomer Hatzair groups have gone this route in recent years, and it seems to give them a more realistic picture of the communal life-style.

Dafna Daoud, 23, finished her Nahal service two years ago, and stayed on Nirim with six other members of her group. Instead of spending eight months at a military outpost on the border, they spent that time living as an independent communal unit on a new civilian settlement, which they hoped would eventually turn into a kibbutz. During that period, they were not under the aegis of the IDF; they were expected to pay their own way through working. Daoud thinks this system is a better way for Nahal to go.

"I think settling border outposts should be abolished," she says. "When you have officers above you telling you what to do, you're not building anything independently. What we did was closest to kibbutz life. If we didn't work, we didn't have money for food. We had to take care of ourselves, as a group. It was an excellent experience."

As graduates of the Hashomer Hatzair youth group, these young people look at Nahal as a way to check out kibbutz life without committing to it permanently.

"I don't know whether we'll build a new kibbutz or not," Rusak says. "It depends a lot on the group. If we stay together, and we want to establish a new kibbutz, that's great. I'm all for it. But that happens pretty rarely."

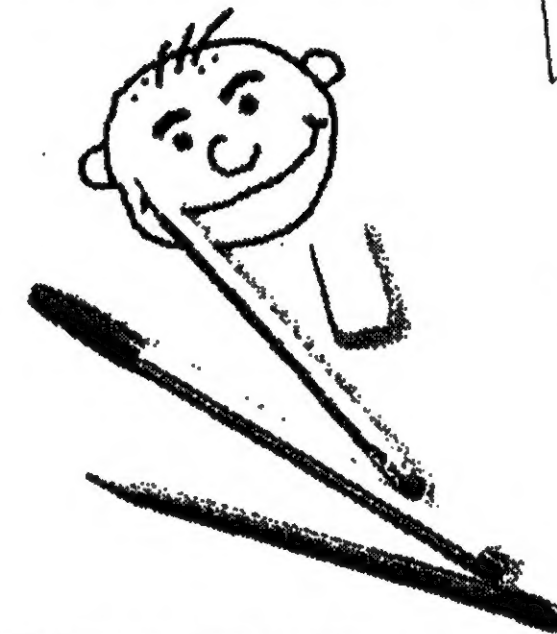
"I honestly don't know whether I'll stay in kibbutz after the army, but I'll cross that bridge when I come to it," says Bader.

Nimrod Heffetz, the Nirim member acting as counselor for Garin Psifas, sums up their attitude. "Even if they move on afterwards and don't stay on kibbutz, the time they spent here is an important experience they will always have. To try to live with a little less egoism in today's world is a good thing."

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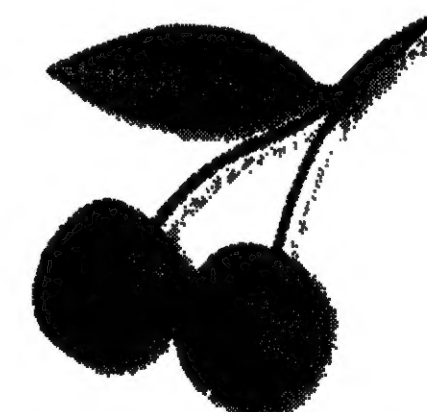
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Mario Garfinkel: The great part of Nahal is that everyone is there to help each other through a difficult time.

A HOME IN NAHAL

In addition to its role in securing the country's borders and settling new kibbutzim, Nahal has also played an important role in aiding the absorption process for thousands of new immigrants. In each Nahal group, there are special units for new immigrants, who receive special Hebrew classes and go through the army together. Many immigrants say Nahal helped them when they might have been a much more difficult experience.

Nahal gives new immigrants a support group, a family, instead of just going right into the army alone. Says Olga Kishinevsky, national executive director of the Association of American Citizens in Israel: "We speak for people who moved to Israel from the Soviet Union. They need a lot of help. Nahal is a great place for them to go. They can learn Hebrew, get used to the climate, and meet other people from their country. It's a great experience for them."

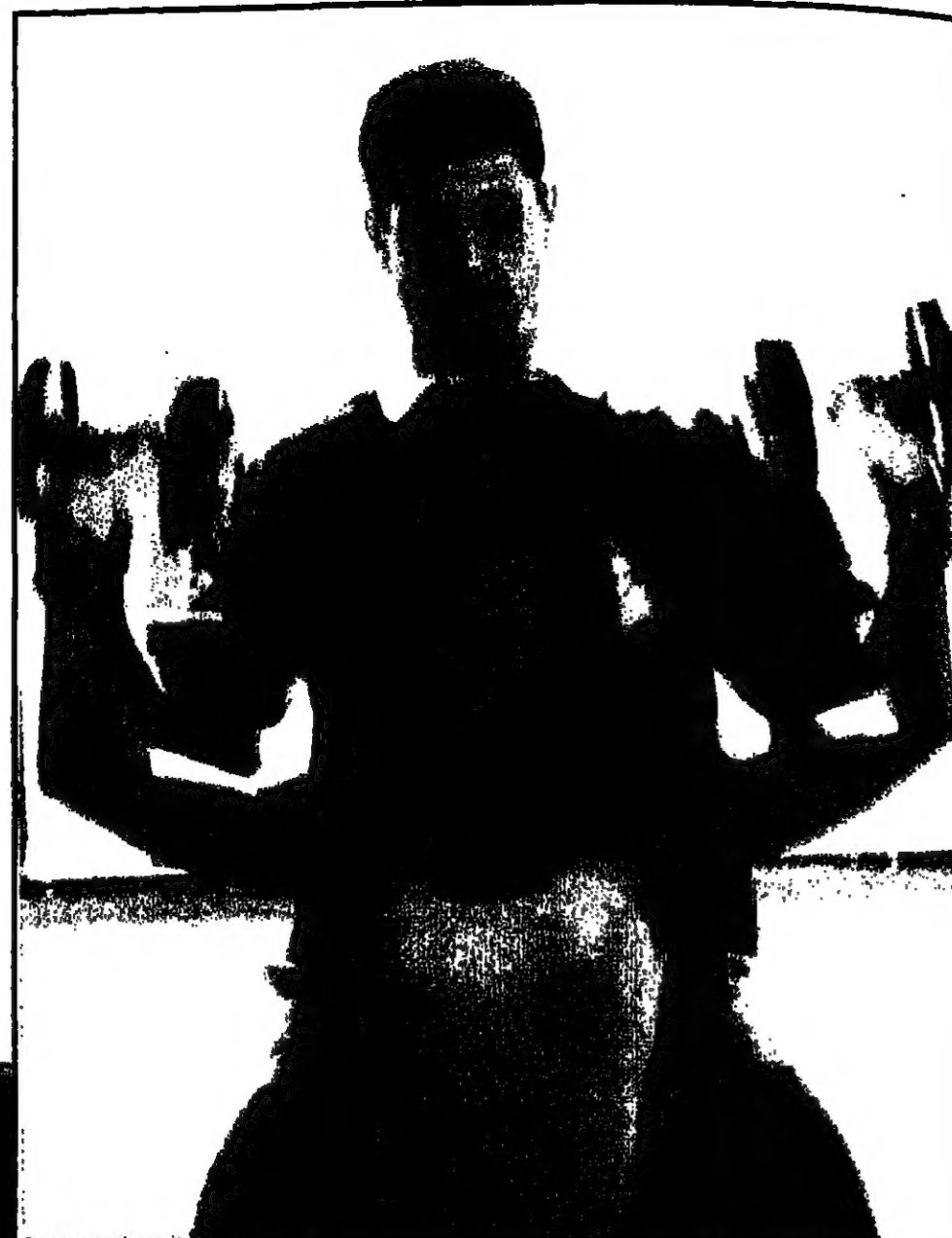
Danny Harel, director of the Nahal program, says: "Nahal is a great place for new immigrants. They can learn Hebrew, get used to the climate, and meet other people from their country. It's a great experience for them."

مكتبة الأمل

FEEL THE BURN



Vladislav Zilberman: 'You get to follow someone and really see the results.'



Regina Bernard gets pointers from her personal trainer, Nimrod Dreyfus.

Personal trainers are demanding, but they are a surefire way to become fit.

By Allison Kaplan Sommer
Photos: Gil Hadani

'F'our more," orders Nimrod Dreyfus to a panting Regina Bernard, who is standing upright with one leg stretched across a weight machine. Obediently the woman in a pink leotard presses her leg down over the turquoise padding of the equipment. "OK, time to move on," Dreyfus guides her to the next piece of equipment in the busy gym in the Ramat Aviv Gimel Country Club. MTV music booms in the background from the overhead TV screen. Anyone claiming that Tel Aviv culture is evolving into that of a Middle Eastern Los Angeles or Miami need only hang out a while in this room to prove the point. Young muscular men in tank tops and tanned gorgeous women in spandex strut, preen and sweat while they work out. Next to them, their older counterparts diligently fight to slow the crawl of middle-age spread or to regain their figures after giving birth. They all have one thing in common: they are paying hundreds of shekels per month for the privilege of pounding the treadmill, pacing the StairMasters and pumping an assortment of weights in this

ultra-modern facility. Some can manage only a few visits a week, others are there for several hours every day. Bernard is a member of a small but growing subgroup for whom just showing up at the gym isn't enough. Three times a week, she receives a supervised workout under the critical eye and iron fist of a taskmaster like Dreyfus, whose job is to chart her progress and push her into the best shape possible. By making an appointment with a personal trainer - and laying out the extra NIS 60 per session - Dreyfus contends, people like Bernard get an extra push toward achieving their fitness goals. "People have all kinds of demands in their life: time for their spouse, their kids, their work," he says. "I'm there to make sure they don't miss a workout. I represent the commitment, you can't achieve success." Like many of Dreyfus's clients, Bernard is not doing this because she needs any major improvements. At 45, she has a slender and muscled physique of which a woman of any age would be proud. Keeping it that way has been important to her all of her adult life. Whereas her friends work out when they feel overweight, Bernard has been active since she was 21, first through tennis and jazz

dancing, then in a more formal way in the gym. Just over a year ago, she turned to Dreyfus for personal training.

"I'd been working out by myself for many, many years, and I got to a point where I couldn't push myself," she says. Gila Birenbaum, a 33-year-old aerobics instructor in Herzliya Pituah, is another Dreyfus client who was already in good shape when she came to him. "Having a trainer keeps you to a rhythm in the weight room. You need the pace, and he helps you to change your workout every day. If you come alone, you tend to do the same things every time and allow yourself long breaks between working out on different pieces of equipment. And you can lose your motivation."

Strength training, she says, "isn't fun for me like aerobics. It's very, very hard work, but the results are worth it."

Dreyfus points to Bernard and Birenbaum as typical of many of his clients "who train by themselves, get to a certain level, then lose the motivation. That's why they need me to drive them."

Recently, Bernard has turned her workouts into a mother-daughter affair. Her daughter Keren, 21, an art history student, has been joining her for the past three months with Dreyfus. Unlike her stoical mother, Keren grumbles, the strain of the heavy lifting shows on her face. Dreyfus, she says, "is really tough. You can't cheat."

But she is sold on the workouts. When her mother travels abroad for business, she shows up for her sessions alone. "You get addicted to it," she confesses. There is another reason why she has decided to continue in her mother's footsteps. "Look what she looks like!" she says, pointing to her mom's torso.

Although her mother admits that looking good is a big part of what drives her, she says that the health benefits and the psychological satisfaction are the real motivating factors. "After I work out, I feel good, as if I have overcome my inner laziness. I think all of us want to try to make the best out of what we are."

That's a concept that Dreyfus has spent his career promoting and selling to the Israeli public.

Dreyfus grew up on Kibbutz Olvat Haim, and first made a name for himself as a water-polo player, spending 11 years on the national team. At 23, he switched sports, and began playing professional soccer for Hapoel Tel Aviv. He interrupted his local sports career to take advantage of a soccer scholarship at New York's Adelphi University. It was there that he studied physical education and watched the workout craze begin to spread across the US. He knew then that he wanted to bring health clubs here.

Back here in 1979, he returned to competitive soccer, and simultaneously opened what he called "the country's first first-class health club" at the Tel Aviv Hilton.

At first, he says, people didn't know exactly what to do with the 10 shiny new Nautilus machines he brought. "It took a while for people to actually use them," he says. "But after seven years, there were 500 members."

After those seven years, he made a giant leap toward what had been his dream: he rented a huge amount of space in the basement of an office building on Tel Aviv's Ben-Yehuda Street and opened his own facility.

But, like many small business dreams, it went sour. His gym was popular - it had more than 1,000 members - but it could not sustain its overheads. Dreyfus sank too much money into the venture, and it went under two years ago in one of Tel Aviv's best-publicized business failures.

Since that painful setback, Dreyfus has reconsidered his options. In addition to being sports director at the Ramat Aviv Olmet facility, he is responsible for running the gym at Tel Aviv's Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza. At both places he

supervises the weight room, trains the staff and works with clients as a personal trainer. The advantage of being a freelancer rather than a gym owner, he says, is that he can spend less time in an office and more in the gym developing his training methods.

Over a glass of carrot juice in the club's cafe, Dreyfus, tall and lanky, with

supervises the weight room, trains the staff and works with clients as a personal trainer. The advantage of being a freelancer rather than a gym owner, he says, is that he can spend less time in an office and more in the gym developing his training methods.

he says proudly, she has dropped 15 kilograms and reduced her number of daily insulin injections by a third.

"Tell them, talk about it," he urges the smiling woman in a baggy T-shirt and matching tights. She agrees, on the condition that her name not be used.

"Doing this not only gives me life, but improves my quality of life," she says. Glancing at Dreyfus she adds: "even



Ifat Shahar: 'I see more and more women coming in.'

close-cropped, slightly graying hair, reviews the qualities he feels are necessary in a good personal trainer. In addition to medical and physiological knowledge, patience, communication skills and a real enthusiasm for helping people get in shape are required.

"I train them in their approach to life," he says. "In addition to working out, there is a lot of talking. We talk about taking responsibility and checkups, and the meaning of weight training in terms of achieving a better quality of life."

An authoritarian streak helps too. "My satisfaction comes when people do exactly what I tell them to do. When I tell someone to do 15 lifts and she only does 12, that pisses me off."

He claims that he can assess a level of desire and commitment in a new client from one session. "I can tell immediately if you are going to stop or not. I know from the first lesson if someone will stay with me."

How? "People who talk too much to me in the first lesson won't make it. People who tell me, 'I don't need this' or 'let's do this.' Others just quietly do what they have to do and you can feel that they will stick with it."

There is no typical client profile. Their ages, and fitness levels, vary. One client in her 40s came to him after developing diabetes. She had never exercised or played sports before in her life. After a

though sometimes I get to the point where I really curse him for being so hard on me."

Often, she says, it is hard to believe that she is really the one lifting weights. "I'm 47 years old! But the way I work, you'd think I was training for the Olympics."

Surprisingly, one group that is under-trained, in Dreyfus's opinion, is local athletes. Surprisingly few Israeli athletes have personal trainers, he says, though many of them frequent the gym and would be likely to improve their performances and extend their careers with training.

"In my opinion, the athletes are not serious here; they would say to a trainer, 'What do you know?' and insist that they know better. I don't know of one really top athlete here with a personal trainer."

In Ramat Aviv, Dreyfus hands most of those seeking a trainer to the band of 20-something staff who supervise the gym.

A number of the clients are even younger than their trainers. In some Tel Aviv social circles, parents think it is never too early for their offspring to get in shape.

Dark-eyed Nir Dash, 16, is sweaty and exhausted after his workout. Getting a personal trainer wasn't his idea, he says: it was his father's. "I was fat," he says bluntly. "It didn't really bother me, but my being fat bothered my father a lot."

A year later, he is anything but chubby, with a tight waist and lightly sculptured biceps. He didn't like working out in the beginning, but he got addicted to the sense of accomplishment, and his improving performance in sports. "When I started, it was too difficult for me to run a kilometer. Now I can run 10 to 15 kilometers without a problem."

His trainer, Vladislav Zilberman, has several teenage clients, and a few who are even younger. "It is hard to motivate kids. Unlike older people, they don't understand what it is all about. Usually, they are not coming of their own volition, it's their parents who are sending them. The parents feel badly if their kids are fat or out of shape. They feel that if they don't address the problem now, it will only get worse later."

Kids like Nir, he says, are the exception to the rule; most youngsters quickly grow tired of working out, particularly if they start too young. "An 11 or 12-year-old really only understands that it's hard to do and tough and it hurts. They don't really understand why they should do it or any benefit it is giving them."

Zilberman, 25, immigrated from Kishinev in Moldova five years ago, with two years of university studies in physical education under his belt. After serving in the IDF, he returned to the Wingate Institute to resume his studies. He would like to go on for a master's degree in sports medicine.

He has been working at the gym for six months, and says that personal training is by far the most satisfying aspect of the job. "You get to really follow someone and see the results. Most of the time, I'm here, instructing various people how to use the equipment, but there's no follow-through. I like to see the changes and watch the progress with the clients."

Although people have more access to sophisticated weight-lifting equipment in this country, Zilberman says that awareness of personal fitness back in Moldova "was much more developed than over here. People cared more about staying in shape." But, he says, "It is definitely growing here" - a good thing for his future in the field.

Ifat Shahar, 21, another trainer, notices growing awareness particularly among Israeli women. During the four months she has worked at the gym, "I see more and more women coming in." Shahar's experience comes from the army, where she got officer candidates into shape at the Wingate Institute.

"Sports is my first love," she says. "I've adored sports since I was seven years old, [when] I played softball and handball. Since girls rarely played these games, I played only with the boys."

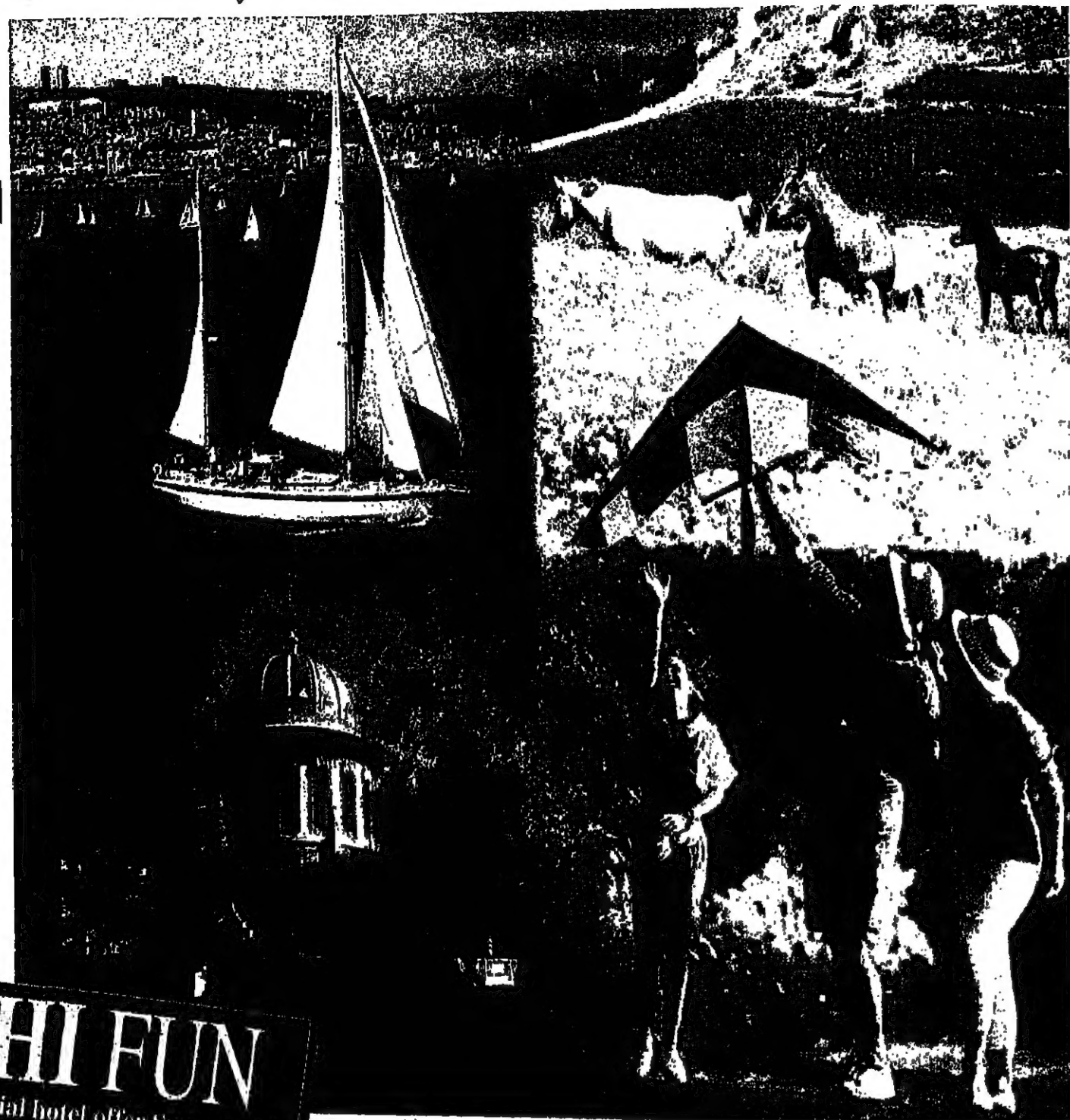
She will be formalizing her studies in September at the Kibbutz Seminar training course. In the long term, her professional ambition is to manage her own gym. "I like explaining what is good for people, giving them knowledge and seeing that this eventually brings them happiness."

It has taken many years for local women to venture into gyms and weight rooms which, for so many years, were strictly testosterone territory. Looking good has always been important to them, but most got that way solely through dieting. Most women are getting to the gym, Shahar says, by way of aerobics classes, which are not always the best form of exercise.

"Healthwise, aerobics is not so good for you. All of that jumping can create a lot of damage to your joints and bones. I don't do it and don't really recommend it to people. You can get just as good an aerobic workout through bicycles and walking. And strength training makes it even more effective."

The Olympia gym in Jerusalem, by contrast, is still a relatively male domain, according to its owner and resident trainer Alon Kirschner. Out of his 240 members, he says, only 15 are women. A champion power lifter, 41-year-old

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Kirschner opened Olympia in 1988, after moving here from Memphis, Tennessee. Unlike the saunas, jacuzzis and aerobic classes in Ramat Aviv, his gym has "no frills." He deals with the seven clients he personally trains - including a young woman, a middle-aged taxi driver and a 77-year-old man - in a similar fashion. "I really push them. It's not unlike basic training."

The demand for personal trainers is lower in the capital than it is in and around the greater Tel Aviv area, Kirschner observes.

Why? Perhaps it has something to do with the proximity of the beach and the smaller Orthodox population. Either way, the average Tel Avivian is probably more vain and body-conscious than his Jerusalem counterpart, and hence more likely to work out.

Kirschner has another answer. "I think it's more because Jerusalemites are kind of tighter with their money," he says. "People have less money, I think than in places like Tel Aviv, Herzliya and Ra'anana. Jerusalem people are just as vain - they're just cheap."

Some of them aren't. Since February, Marian Sherron, 27, has gone to Olympia to work out with Kirschner four times a week at a cost of NIS 50 per hour plus the gym membership.

"I think Allon is a great personal trainer because he has a whole concept of how the body works, and a great deal of knowledge and experience he will share with you. You can't get the information you want from a book. Books address the average physique, and no one is average. The only way I can get the results I want is with a personal trainer. It maximizes my time in the gym."

"Part of it is the positive feedback. He gives you the extra edge when he pushes you properly. Everyone is gunning for when they start an exercise program. It's hard to keep that going without help."

She admits that there is less societal pressure to be shapely in Jerusalem - where wearing a long skirt generally means that you are traditional, not that you are hiding your cellulite - than there was in her hometown of New York City.

"Ironically, I got most serious about getting in shape after I moved to Jerusalem. I didn't do it to keep up with anyone around me. It was interesting when I was in yeshiva in Har Nof. I was the only one up in the morning exercising, walking



around with my Walkman.

"Of course I want to look good, but looking good is the least of all reasons why I do it," she says. "When you work out, your whole life changes. It's not just your body. It's like a domino effect: it helps me physiologically, and then psychologically."

Kirschner has even convinced some

yeshiva heads that a healthy - and holy - mind operates best in a healthy body. He has a significant clientele of yeshiva students, many of them modern Orthodox young men from overseas. The heads of the yeshivot argued at first that their students should spend every possible moment at study, but were convinced by Kirschner that a workout might be a good

"My satisfaction comes when people do exactly what I tell them to do. When I tell someone to do 15 lifts and she only does 12, that pisses me off."

- Nimrod Dreyfus

idea. To satisfy the yeshivot he made the gym male-only from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

The rest of the time, he says, "I hope I provide a healthy atmosphere for Jewish boys and girls to meet each other. I've made a couple of matches here already."

Dreyfus's gym is one of many in Tel Aviv that offers personal training services. And in Jerusalem, Kirschner faces competition from, for example, the plush gym in the Hyatt Regency Hotel, where a personal training session costs a whopping NIS 90 an hour. Dreyfus may soon be available to Jerusalemites as well: he is now negotiating to supervise the gym at the capital's Holiday Inn Crowne Plaza.

Dreyfus is also getting into the business that he sees as the wave of the fitness future as Israelis enjoy more leisure time and larger homes: exercise equipment for the home. Dreyfus is a consultant to businesses importing home exercise equipment, and has made special "house calls" to some of their customers.

"Tonight I'm going to Rishon LeZion; a family bought a mini-gym, and I'm going to instruct them on how to use it," he says. "In the next three years, more and more people are going to be setting up equipment in their houses."

Dreyfus employs two young women to offer people regular training sessions in the comfort of their own homes. He passes on most of these opportunities, preferring to meet his clients in the gym, because he doesn't like spending too much time on the road, away from his family. He has two children, aged six and three. His 31-year-old wife is, as one might expect, in great shape. How she gets that way, though, might surprise some of those who pay for a personal trainer.

"She works out on her own. She doesn't need my help," Dreyfus shakes his head. "That just kills me."

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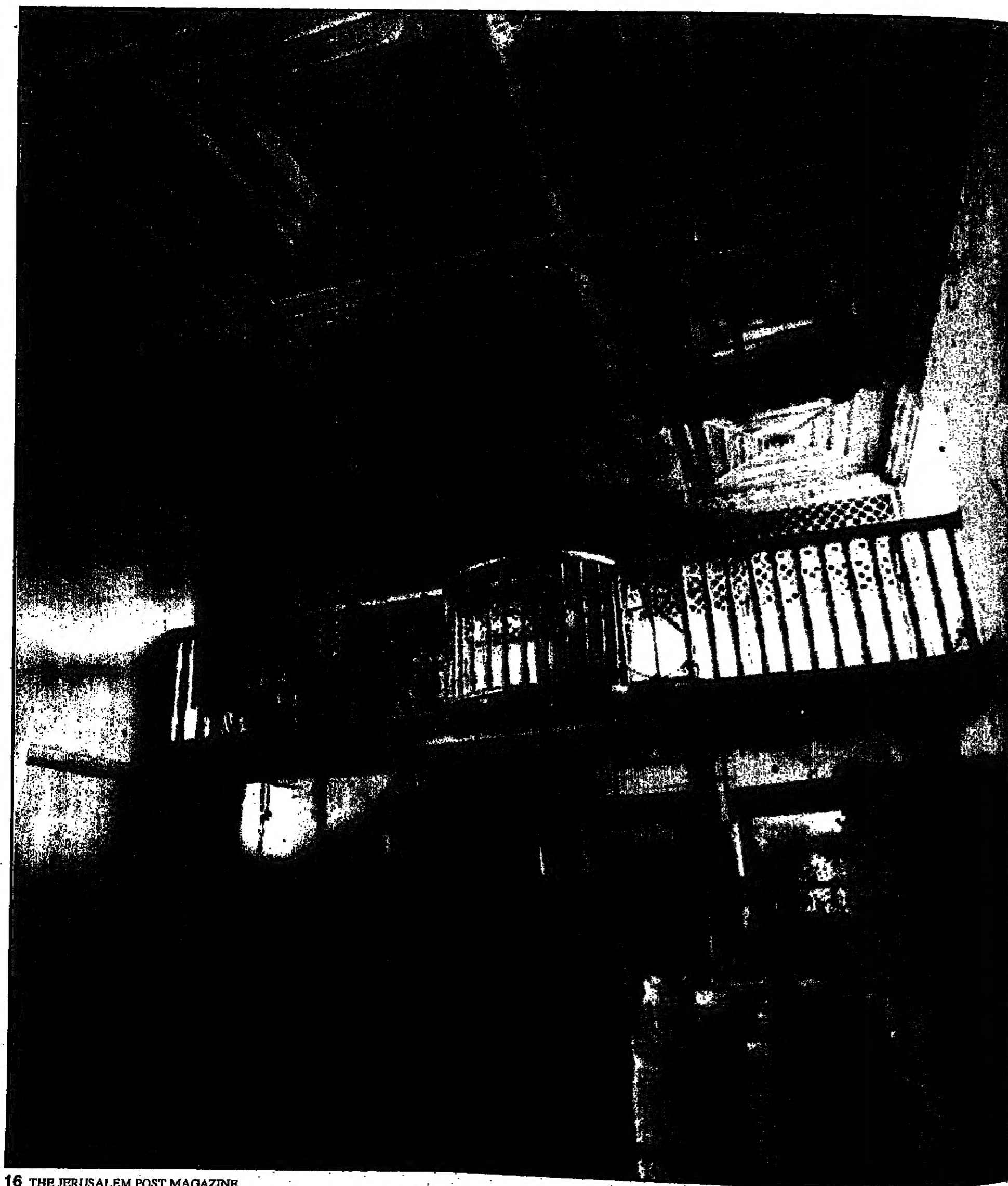
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THE JEWS IN THE CROWN



16 THE JERUSALEM POST MAGAZINE

Nearly two millennia of Jewish presence in India are summed up in a colorful new Israel Museum exhibition. Star of the show is an exotic carved and painted 16th century synagogue rescued from Cochin.

By Meir Ronnen

In the 1950s and 1960s I had the pleasure of publishing in *The Jerusalem Post* a number of articles by visitors to Cochin on the Malabar coast of west India, accompanied by photographs of the extraordinary Kadavumbagam synagogue. The last thing I ever

wanted was to see that synagogue, or what was left of it, installed in the Israel Museum. In these articles which, decades later, associate curator of Judaica Orpa Slapak searched for the lost synagogue. Its ark had been removed and brought to Israel with nearly all the Jews of Cochin four decades ago, and installed in a new settlement of Jews from India and Egypt at Nehalim, where it remains in storage.

At first, it seemed to Slapak that the synagogue had vanished. Its lavish decorations painted over, it had been turned into a factory. Five years ago the Israel Museum informed that the interior of the synagogue had been acquired by a German antiquities dealer who wanted to sell it. In an extensive paper on the synagogue exhibited in the latest *Israel Museum* annual, chief curator of Judaica Iris Had describes how funds for the purchase were provided by Fred and Della Weiss of London and a five-year conservation project undertaken. The elaborately carved ceiling, balcony and shutters of the synagogue, impeccably dehumidified and restored by the museum's Dudu Shenhar and David Elgeleizen so as not to look like new, have now been installed at the museum, along with the two other abandoned and subsequently rescued synagogues, one from Italy, the other a painted barrel vault from Poland.

Concomitantly with the opening of the synagogue and after more than a decade of research on the three main centers of Jewish life in the Indian subcontinent, the museum has also mounted a fascinating exhibition on the Jews of India and produced and written most of its splendid catalog. The extensive display has been curiously titled (by designer Elisheva Yarchi) as a comparatively small area leading into the synagogue. It is hoped that at least some of it will remain permanently on display.

The show follows in the footsteps of the grand Israel Museum exhibitions of Jewish culture of the Jews of Yemen, Persia, Morocco and Kurdistan.

exactly as they had been before. The carved and painted wooden ceiling and panels are in the best traditions of South Indian carving prevalent in the many churches, mosques and temples of Kerala. The lotus, animals, birds, even cobras are present but a few details have a distinct European flavor.

The ark, built later, would not have looked out of place in an Italian baroque synagogue.

In Kerala, Hindu temples and synagogues sometimes stood together on the same plot.

All the cultural makeup of the three main Jewish communities in India — the Baghdadi, Bene Israel and Cochinese — is a mixture of various Jewish and other traditions. What's remarkable about this disparate, eclectic ethnographic display is that nearly all the Judaica in it looks so familiar.

An unusual feature of this synagogue was the balcony, thought to derive from raised platforms in early synagogues in southern France and in Italy. In Cochin it was used as an alternative *bima* on the Sabbath and festivals. Behind it, concealed by lattice work, was the women's gallery. The columns were once partly clad in silver, looted after the synagogue became a factory.

In India nearly a billion people living in 25 states speak a variety of languages and belong to many religions and castes. Despite more recent Hindu/Muslim/Sikh frictions, an atmosphere of pluralism once prevailed, at least as long as the British remained. Jews never had trouble observing their own religious customs (except when they were once harassed by the Portuguese Inquisition).

With few exceptions the Jews of India dressed like the Indians around them or, later on, like the British.

The oldest and smallest Jewish community in India was that of the Jews of Cochin, who for possibly two millennia lived in the fertile Malabar coastal strip in southwest India that once belonged to the Raja of Cochin, but since independence has become part of the state of Kerala.

The rich spices of Malabar were a magnet for Jewish and other traders in antiquity. The first Jews to reach southern India were thought to have arrived during Solomon's reign; others aver that they came following the Babylonian exile. But the earliest document about them is a set of copper plates engraved around 1000 CE, granting religious and economic privileges to community leader Joseph Raban.

Early in the 16th century, Jews expelled from Spain arrived in Cochin and were known to the indigenous Jews as *paradesi* (foreign Jews) or "white Jews." The two communities kept somewhat apart and had



(Above) Decorated doors from the Cochin synagogue, on view at the Israel Museum.

(Left) Indian Jewish women attend a baby naming for a girl.

(Facing page) The interior of the Kadavumbagam synagogue has been installed at the museum.

(PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ISRAEL MUSEUM)





(Above) A Cochin family, early 20th century; (below) replica of a home in which the Bene Israel lived.

(PHOTOS COURTESY OF ISRAEL MUSEUM)

their own synagogues; by the 17th century there were altogether eight of them in five different localities.

Both communities were persecuted by the Inquisition imported by the Portuguese; but the Cochin Jews later flourished under Dutch occupation (1663-1795) and again under the British (1792-1947), when many Jews held posts in the colonial administration.

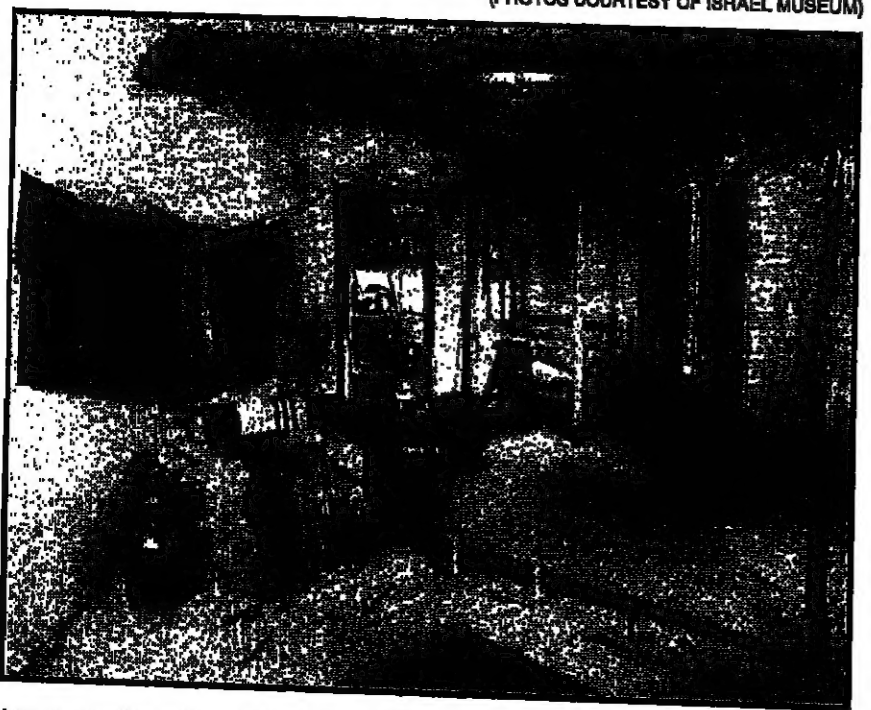
By 1950 there were 2,500 Jews in Cochin; most came here shortly after and settled in the Jerusalem Corridor, Beersheba and Upper Galilee. Only about 50 still live peacefully in Kerala, a mixed Hindu, Moslem and Christian state.

The largest Jewish community in India were the Bene Israel: 25,000 by the time of their immigration to Israel in the '50s and '60s. For hundreds of years and longer they had lived in villages in the Kolaba district of Maharashtra state outside Bombay. Completely isolated from other Jews, they had no knowledge of the Jewish legal system that evolved after the Second Temple period. But they maintained strict Sabbath and circumcision observance and began their prayers with the *Shema*, "Hear O Israel."

The Bene Israel did not live in separate groups, but were simply scattered among mixed villages of rural, easy-going Moslems and Hindus; and lived exactly like them. In the towns they lived in brick houses with tiled roofs; in the villages, their simple homes of mud-brick walls, with straw veranda roofs held up by wooden posts, had packed mud floors covered with a layer of dried cow dung, which was also their chief fuel. They had almost no furniture and they cooked, ate and slept on the floor. The kitchen was always in the rear, opening onto a backyard (a basic design feature of most homes and terrace houses throughout the world until recently). One of these village homes is reproduced in the exhibition.

Also on view are the special utensils used to grind, cut, pound and mix the abundance of vegetables and spices used by the Bene Israel and their neighbors.

At the end of the 18th century, following the successes of the East India Company and the subsequent consolidation of British rule, the rural Bene Israel farmers and oil pressers left their villages for the



towns, mostly settling in Bombay, where they became construction workers, longshoremen, carpenters and civil servants. Then in the 19th century teachers from Cochin came north to teach the Bene Israel Hebrew and religion. At the same time, Christian missionaries unsuccessfully tried to convert them. All this only served to weld the Bene Israel into a community.

In Israel this community has swelled to 45,000 and lives in Lod, Ramle, Dimona, Beersheba and Haifa.

The smaller but influential Baghdadi community (a generic term covering Jews from Iraq and Syria and later Yemen, Iran and Afghanistan) were mostly merchants, bankers and industrialists.

The first Baghdadis to arrive in India, in the mid-18th century, were merchants from Basra, Aleppo and Baghdad who traded or worked with the East India Company. They first settled in the port of Surat, before moving south to Bombay and east to Calcutta, the dominant mercantile cities of west and east India.

Another group of Baghdadi Jews arrived early in the 19th century, fleeing persecution by the rulers of Iraq.

A few legendary Baghdadis became

founders of commercial empires and family dynasties. One such was David Sassoon, who together with other members of his family, established educational, medical and charitable institutions vital to the development of Bombay. Sassoon also built two synagogues and in 1847, a public library, a photo of which is presented here.

The Baghdadi community in Calcutta was founded by Moses Dwek Hacohen from Aleppo and boasted three synagogues.

The Baghdadi 19th-century synagogues were opulent and Western in style, sometimes reminiscent of churches. In contrast, Bene Israel village synagogues were often more like *stieblach*, a hall with a niche serving as a *Tora* ark; but in town Bene Israel synagogues were also of Western influence. The Cochin were more traditional, holding onto their hallowed ritual designs.

Some Cochin came to Bombay to work in the Sassoon cotton mills. Some of the *paradesi* married into Baghdadi families, but the darker Cochin tended to keep to themselves.

Under the British, a Baghdadi, David Ezra, became sheriff of Calcutta and a photo in this display shows him seated and holding his rod of office, flanked by two

British civil servants. Behind them are four tired-looking bearers holding the sheriff's heavy mace and symbols of office (the caption incorrectly identifies them as bodyguards).

A number of Indian Jews of all communities made distinguished careers in the judiciary, colonial service and armed forces. These included a famous cavalry colonel and, more recently, a general and an admiral; this show makes no mention of them or military service.

Strongly identified with and in every way imitative of the British, the Baghdadi communities, some 5,000 in all, left India as the British departed; only a few came to Israel, the rest going to English-speaking countries.

A special section of this show deals with Hebrew publications.

By the mid-19th century the Baghdadi community felt a need for a local Hebrew press. Among its many considerations was the fact that missionaries were printing Christian tracts in Hebrew.

The first Hebrew printer in India was a Cochin-born Yemenite, Elazar Aaron Araki, who set up a Hebrew press in Calcutta in 1841. His elegant and impeccably proofed and printed books dealt with ritual laws, prayers, folk legends and poetry. Later, Hebrew presses were set up in Bombay as well as Calcutta.

By 1855, the first periodical, *Dorash Tov l'Amma*, brought world and local news to the Bombay Jewish community. The following year saw the printing of Iraqi Arabic-Jewish books providing translations of the Bible and Hebrew and world literature. Some five Hebrew periodicals subsequently appeared in Calcutta, the last established in 1901.

Many of the customs and ceremonies of the Jewish communities were a mix of Jewish, Hindu and Moslem traditions. A shared custom was the singing of songs by women when working at household tasks as well as at community events and holidays; only the content of the songs was different. Women's wedding saris were similar to regular Indian saris; and colorful Indian decorations were used on celebratory baby cribs, like the one on view here.

The Bene Israel, like other Oriental Jewish communities, celebrated a *henna* ceremony in which the ring fingers of bride and groom were smeared with *henna* paste.

A canopy bed, the *manara*, was a feature of Cochin Jewish marriage festivities, which once lasted three weeks; in Israel, the marriage *ketuba*, the *harel* at ceremony and the wedding itself are all marked in one day. The bride couple used to receive guests while seated under the *manara* canopy. A similar *manara* canopy was also erected in the synagogue to display the *Tora* scrolls on Simhat *Tora*; one is installed in the synagogue here.

Other Indian Jewish customs, like the naming customs for girls, are also featured in this show, as are the recreational games played by all the communities except for the peculiarly Cochin *axha*.

Other games were imported from Iraq, like *tac-ti* (backgammon) or from China, like *mah-jongg*, originally a man's game but long beloved of Jewish matrons from Finchley to Florida. *Karum* was a version of a British game.

Sadly, there's no mention of cricket, that universally admired Indian sport. In the not so distant past, many of the Israeli cricket league's most notable players were those who had brought their skills with them from India. Now basketball is more popular and the community's (and Israel's) pride is Maccabi Tel Aviv's Doron Jamchee.

A fascinating show; don't miss it. An English catalog will later be available as well as the Hebrew one. The catalogs were made possible by Oded and Tami Ellashar of Jerusalem and William Margulies of London.

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SOUNDLESS IN GAZA

A deaf child in the Gaza Strip used to be considered a shame to his parents. Now that is changing as the first school for the deaf in Gaza opens up a whole new world.

By Abraham Rabinovich

(Above)
Gerry Shaw 'talks' with
Gaza youngsters.

20 THE JERUSALEM POST MAGAZINE

15 JULY 1995

Like in a cocoon within a cocoon, thousands of Palestinians growing up in the gloom enveloping the Gaza Strip have been encompassed within an even darker world without color or names or meaning. The deaf of Gaza, who number many times the world average because of widespread genetic defects, have long been deprived of the most basic human right of all—the right to understand—by an almost total lack of education.

"They come to us with virtually no concept of language, although they are perfectly intelligent," says Gerry Shaw, who three years ago established the first school for the deaf in Gaza. "They couldn't read or write. Many of their parents didn't want to accept that their children are deaf because of the stigma and refused to have them learn sign language."

"Children were punished if they tried to use it. They became weepy and clingy. They had no idea that things had names, that there are things like colors and sizes. They had no idea of where they were, no concept of today, yesterday and tomorrow. They couldn't even celebrate birthdays, because they didn't understand the concept of time."

Until Shaw took the first step toward rescuing them from the medieval isolation to which they had been consigned, virtually none of the thousands of deaf children in the strip had gone to school. While the

rest of the Gaza population may have been deprived of material things that make life endurable, the deaf have been deprived of the means to make sense of the world about them and of communicating their thoughts.

The school, which the American-born Shaw calls The Affalauna ("our children" in Arabic) Center for Deaf Children, is an oasis of cheerfulness, order and color.

A visitor recently entering a classroom found it filled with children exuberantly talking, but the loudest sound was of fingers softly patting open palms.

"When they came here three years ago many of them had no way of communicating," says Shaw. "Now just look at their little fingers flying. They're gossiping, learning, sharing."

Shaw's interest in the deaf began when she was working for a UN office in the strip that gave medical examinations to children. "Almost every day, mothers would come with children aged three or four and say they weren't talking," she recalls. "By a simple clap of the hand behind the child's back the pediatrician would see that there was a hearing problem if the child didn't react, and would send him for testing."

"I came to realize how many deaf children we had. Within five years we had diagnosed more than 4,000 cases of deafness in children between six months and four years of age. And this was just in Gaza City, not the whole strip. I discovered that we had no services at all for deaf children

in the Gaza Strip. Except for a lucky handful who were sent to Jordan or Syria, none of them went to school. I felt I had to do something. It became an obsession."

The number of severely deaf in an average population is 1 to 1.5 persons per thousand, according to Prof. Amichai Wiesel of the education faculty of Tel Aviv University. Gaza, with a population of some 800,000, should by this measure have between 800 and 1,200 deaf. No hard figures exist for the actual number, but Shaw herself saw 4,000 in a brief time period and has heard estimates of 15,000 deaf in the strip. Deaf children generally are not defective in their intelligence if the deafness is genetic, says Wiesel, but there must be communication if their intelligence is to be nurtured.

Shaw began to seek an answer to the problem in 1991 by inviting a group of women friends, most of them educators, to join her in forming an association in Gaza to raise funds for charitable work.

After mastering the art of proposal drafting, she received a modest grant from a Japanese nongovernmental organization to get the project off the ground. All that remained was to train a teaching staff, decide on a curriculum, find premises for the school, raise the money to sustain the program and choose the students.

There was no one in the Gaza Strip who knew anything about education for the deaf. Although there were skilled educators of the deaf in Israel, the intifada had limited

the strip into a no-go zone for most Israeli educators. Shaw, however, located an Israeli Arab woman educator of the deaf, Janet Abu-Ghosh, who was willing to hazard the job. Over a year, she provided the bulk of a 700-hour course, assisted by Palestinian personnel from the West Bank. The 40 student teachers who completed the course had been selected from among hundreds who responded to advertisements placed by Shaw in Gaza newspapers. They were graduates either of local universities or of teacher training institutes. The initial grant was sufficient to rent a seedy three-room apartment for classrooms and hire eight teachers.

Within a year, enough money was coming in to move to new premises occupying the bottom two stories of a handsome three-story villa. It was located opposite the building that served as headquarters of the Israeli border police in Gaza until last year's pullout.

Today, 91 students aged four to 14 attend the school, where the floors are carpeted, the furniture new ("I like bright colors," says Shaw of the red-topped desks), the kindergarten well stocked with American toys and the numerous bulletin boards attractively laid out with displays of photographs and notices. A sense of order pervades.

"It's very important to teach deaf children order," says Shaw. "They need it more than normal children. It makes them feel good inside. The thing about language itself is that it puts order in your life."

The most important furnishing in the classrooms is the large mirrors, where students practice lipreading. There are numerous computers whose value as a teaching aid for the deaf is well exploited.

The difference between the inarticulate, frightened children of three years ago and the bright-eyed children they have become is stunning, says Shaw. "We had

to start from zero—teaching them the words for mother, father, chair. Now you can get into a real conversation with them about anything."

Born in Chicago 51 years ago as Geraldine Fanter, Shaw studied forestry at Utah State University—where she met and married a Palestinian named Yasser Shaw, who was studying journalism. They subsequently lived in Chicago and a number of cities in the west. Yasser worked as a purchasing agent for aerospace firms and Gerry worked in administrative jobs, sometimes in hospitals.

"It was my work in hospitals that got me interested in doing something for people," she says.

The couple was living in Laguna Hills, California when Yasser died suddenly at age 36. Gerry, who was pregnant with their third child, decided to move to Kuwait at the urging of several of her husband's siblings, who were living there. The relocation promised to provide the widow and her young children with an economic safety net and a warm family environment.

It soon provided more than that. Within a few months after her arrival Gerry married Yasser's oldest brother, Issam, a divorced man 20 years her senior. Issam, a lawyer, was personnel director for the British-owned Gulf Oil Company.

"It just seemed very natural," says Gerry. "There were children involved. My kids felt comfortable with Issam and had begun calling him daddy. To me it was important that he loved the children. It was very natural for me too. He had a lot of his brother's personality traits, the same way of looking at life. I didn't feel I was marrying a stranger."

Life in Kuwait, however, was another matter. "It's a very phony place, just money. I had to constantly leave the kids with nannies in order to entertain or be entertained, [attend] lunches and dinners,

seeing off people going abroad, welcoming them coming back."

Within less than two years, the family moved to the Gaza Strip, the Shawas' ancestral home. Her husband's father, Rushdi, had been mayor of Gaza and Rushdi's brother was then mayor. Shawas, in fact, had held the mayoral post in Gaza since the municipality was formed a century before.

Despite the stark contrast between opulent, easy-living Kuwait and impoverished, trouble-beset Gaza, Gerry says she much prefers living in Gaza. She had not, to be sure, moved into one of Gaza's seething refugee camps. The 15-room family home in Gaza City is a beautifully furnished, Moorish-style two-story house shielded from the turbulence of the world outside by a wall that also encloses a garden. It had been the home of Issam's father. In 1973, Gerry's one child by her second husband was born in Gaza, a daughter named Newerah.

During the intifada, Gerry, who has adopted Islam, wore a headscarf in public. It was an act of discretion prompted by the rise of Islamic fundamentalism and the heated atmosphere. She no longer wears a scarf and says she is not bothered. There are one or two other American women married to Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, but Gerry's social circle is largely Palestinian. She and her husband go abroad once or twice a year.

Life in Gaza is better and more varied than people on the outside presume, she says.

With a waiting list for her school of at least 500 prospective students, Shaw is hoping to raise sufficient funds to open a branch in another part of the strip and, eventually, to build a school for the deaf from scratch. "That's for the future. Right now the most important thing is to get as many kids as possible into school."

She hopes that some of the children will eventually attend Gallaudet University for the deaf in Washington, D.C., so they can come back and serve the deaf community in Gaza with academic training. Five of the 20 teachers in the school today are deaf people who studied in Jordan or Syria. The rest are hearing people.

"The Gaza Strip is not Third World," says Shaw. "It is just poor. We have a population that loves education and responds to it."

The children wear a school uniform consisting of blue sweaters and blue skirts or trousers. They smile a lot, interact in a lively fashion with their teachers and each other and display a sense of humor. After PLO chairman Yasser Arafat visited the school last year, the children gave him their own sign name, a tug of the lower lip—equivalent to calling him Yasser the Lip.

"We have a 5-to-1 teacher-student ratio," says Shaw. "Otherwise it wouldn't work. That's the ratio all over the world."

Amjad Shaw, 25, a distant relative by marriage, teaches math in the highest of the school's six grades. An engineering graduate, he had been recruited for the math post after the students demanded to know more than the previous teacher could teach.

"They are equal to sixth-grade students in a normal school," says Amjad. "We hope that they will eventually be able to go to a regular school."

On a blackboard, two boys were working out the multiplication of a four-digit number by a three-digit number. "They teach each other," says Amjad. "I'm just supervising. You can say that we have conquered mathematics in this school."

When word of the school first spread in the Gaza Strip, parents inundated Shaw with requests for admission for their children. Some tried to bribe her with chickens. Some even threatened her.

One elderly man from the southern part



Gerry Shaw: "When they came here three years ago, many of them had no way of communicating. Now just look at their little fingers flying. They're gossiping, learning, sharing."

JULY 14, 1995 21

'I'M NOT SAD INSIDE ANY LONGER'

Shortly before the outbreak of the intifada, Hashem Abu Ghadell, a 29-year-old deaf carpenter from Gaza, joined hearing friends on a bus outing to Ashkelon.

The bus let them off in the center of the city and Abu Ghadell indicated to his friends that he preferred walking on his own. Fine, they said, pointing at their watches, but back at the bus in an hour. And don't get lost.

Abu Ghadell, they knew, was an enthusiast who might easily get involved in something that interested him without paying attention to time.

Abu Ghadell set off at a leisurely pace, looking into shop windows and at the faces of people on the street. Glancing into a cafe, he was astonished to see a group of people at tables inside carrying on a vigorous conversation in sign language.

He entered and sat at a table, pointing at a coke bottle when the waitress came up to take his order. It was the first time he had ever seen deaf people talking in other than Palestinian sign. It was the first opportunity to eavesdrop, as it were, on Israelis. Despite the difference in signing, he could sometimes get the drift of what was being said. In God's time, he said to himself, we could be friends.

As he sat intently watching he was noticed by one of the Israelis. There were suddenly glances in his direction and he saw them conferring among themselves, shielding their fingers from him. The way he was watching them made it apparent he understood sign. Finally a woman approached and asked in sign where he was from.

"I thought to myself," says Abu Ghadell, as he recalls the incident, "what should I say? If I said I was from Gaza maybe they'd kill me or beat me up. So I said America." The sign he gave for America was fingers intertwined, like a picket fence, the sign used by deaf Americans themselves.

When the woman carried the news back to the group Abu Ghadell was enthusiastically beckoned to join them. As soon as he hesitantly joined the Israelis, he was inundated with greetings and home invitations. The situation was getting extremely awkward and the hour, he suddenly noticed, was long since up.

Excusing himself to go to the men's room, Abu Ghadell slipped out of the coffee shop. When he reached the bus he found his friends agitated. "Where have you been Hashem?" they shouted. "We've already been to the police and there's a

search out for you."

SITTING IN Gerry Shaw's office last month, Abu Ghadell laughed as he recalled the story.

Abu Ghadell is perhaps the best illustration of the deep impact that the Alufna school has had on the world of the deaf in Gaza. He is the father of five children, three of them deaf. Two are in Shaw's school. He also has a deaf sister whom he supports. His face comes alive when he uses sign language. So vivid are his hand and body signals that even a person untutored in sign language can often follow his meaning.

"When I was a boy," he says through an interpreter, "I stayed at home when other children went to school. I would have loved to go to a school for the deaf in Jordan, but we had no money. My father died when I was four. When I was eight, my mother told me I had to go to work. I didn't want to. I wanted to study. Many people think the deaf can't learn, but we can. I became very agitated when my mother told me this, and she had to calm me."

He went to work as an apprentice in a furniture workshop. "I hated it. I was the only deaf person, and there were four hearing people. They made fun of me."

At 13, he went to work for another employer who treated him well and complimented him on his work. "He was patient with me and proud of me. This job was wonderful." At 16, Hashem was named a supervisor despite his handicap. The hearing workers whom he was in charge of picked up sign language from him sufficiently to communicate with him. He married a hearing person and now has his own small carpentry workshop.

"When I heard that this school was going to open I couldn't wait," he says, biting his nails to indicate the anxiety he felt. He volunteered to build the furniture in the school at cost. It was an offer Shaw could not refuse, and almost all the attractive furniture in the classrooms is his.

After classes he comes to the school to give an hour-long lesson in sign language to the hearing teachers to improve their proficiency.

"We were blind before," says Abu Ghadell. "Now we can see. We were deaf inside. We want deaf children here to be the same as in other countries, not deaf inside. I'm not sad inside any longer. Now I am very strong." —A.R.

of the Gaza Strip takes his grandchild to school every day — a journey of more than an hour — and waits patiently outside of day to take the child home. "He says he is happy to sacrifice the rest of his life for his little boy," says Gerry Shaw. Parents take immense pride in the accomplishments of children whose affliction they had once regarded as shameful.

"A lot of our hearing parents can't read or write. Now there is this little deaf kid who can write a letter for them."

Because of the stigma attached to deafness, many deaf in the strip are married off to first cousins and other near relatives — some deaf, some not — since it is easier to make a match for the deaf within the family. However, this only reinforces the genetic problem. In many families, members of all three living generations are afflicted with deafness.

"I saw little kids who needed a chance in life," says Shaw, recalling the vision that impelled her. "They were perfectly normal, intelligent children who were isolated and miserable. I wanted to give them a future by providing a very basic academic education. I wanted to help deaf people in the Gaza Strip become part of the community, to help them gain insight into the hearing world and vice-versa. There are two different cultures."

Shaw will discuss the establishment of her school next Thursday at the 18th International Congress on Education of the Deaf being held at the Dan Panorama Convention Center in Tel Aviv from July 16 to 20.

It was fortuitous that Gaza's tiny cocoon enclosing its deaf children began to be pierced just as the outer cocoon surrounding Gaza itself shows promise of being shed. Says Gerry Shaw: "We're happy that the children are starting to have an understanding of the world around them when things seem to be improving."

A Gambling Man

DOSTOEVSKY: The Miraculous Years, 1865-1871 by Joseph Frank. New Jersey, Princeton University Press. 333 pp. \$35.

By Haim Chertok

With simulated leather binding and arresting woodcuts, the Constance Garnett translation of *Crime and Punishment* was my initial selection from an outfit calling itself the Fine Editions Book Club. For a 15-year-old, this signaled a quantum leap up from classics comics. Within a few years I had enthusiastically consumed all of Dostoevsky's major novels, but by grad school the perceptive intensity of his characters and gripping situations seemed part and parcel of adolescence, a phase to be outgrown. Nevertheless, in due course I tried to fob off my C&P on three of my brood. Each, in turn, dutifully opened the pages of my heavy edition, and each offered due cause for laying it aside. This past spring, however, my youngest offspring, she of the most romantic sensibility, galloped through it virtually nonstop. Persistence and an early passion had been vindicated.

Mir's fervor set me to musing whether after all Dostoevsky was worth serious reconsideration, a timely notion because we now have before us the fourth in Joseph Frank's five-part life of the great Russian writer. This is a much-acclaimed project that Frank, with un-Pendorish deliberation, discipline, and discretion, has been fulfilling with brilliance ever since he undertook it some 40 years ago. As in earlier volumes, Frank's investigation of the self-dramatizing figure who entered a Siberian prison a radical, emerged a reactionary, and became a great artist, is patient, thorough, moderate, free of jargon, undogmatic, and highly persuasive.

Volume IV covers the period between 1865 and 1871, years during which Dostoevsky married for a second time, moved abroad, and, in the fullness of his powers, wrote *Crime and Punishment*, *The Idiot*, and *The Devils*, as well as *The Gambler* and *The Eternal Husband*. The world is unequivocal. In a world and time when the Russia of Vladimir Zhirinovsky was shamelessly emerging, a reconsideration of the work of the great Slavophile original is essential.

The Miraculous Years opens with Dostoevsky in (typically) dire circumstances, only even more so. Within months, both Dostoevsky's wife and his older brother died. Bereft and lonely, Dostoevsky impulsively assumed his brother's many debts as well as the support of his family. Hounded by creditors and family, in desperation he sold rights to an edition of his complete works to date for a flat 3,000 rubles from an unscrupulous publisher. Worse, he promised to produce a new novella within three months, or else forfeit rights to his novels for nine more years.

Like Dickens, Dostoevsky grew accustomed to deadlines — to producing installments for serial publication in periodicals — but this time he seemed have overreached himself. Overcoming his reluctance to gamble with a new means of composition, a horrified friend persuaded Dostoevsky to try expediting his writing through dictation. A few days later 21-year-old stenographer Ana Grigoryevna Solikina, an admirer of his work, turned up at his flat with sharpened pencils. This was a rare occasion when the compulsive



Again and again Frank traces significant elements in Dostoevsky's fiction to newspaper items. He was fascinated, for example, by the trial of Olga Umetskaya, a 14-year-old arsonist, which brought to light a horrific picture of family tyranny and cruelty. Aspects of her history contributed to the characterization of Nastasya Filippovna (*The Idiot*). On the other hand Frank rejects the longstanding theory that an actual murderer whom Dostoevsky encountered in prison or a case history reported in the press served as a donnee for Raskolnikov or for his crime. The most that Frank would conjecture is that the young writer's enforced intimacy with a criminal culture and acquaintance with criminality probably fueled a general disposition to use crime — especially murder — as a substratum to the world of his fiction and to illustrate his own philosophical speculations.

Aside from the fiction and Anna's writing, Frank's principal sources are Dostoevsky's notebooks and his correspondence with editors, friends, and a favorite niece. Against the tendency of most current literary biographers, however, Frank does not aim to exhaustively exhumate the minutiae of his subject's day-by-day encounters or to indulge in outé psychological speculation. First and foremost, Frank is a literary critic, and he never forgets that the primary reason for our interest in this Dostoevsky chap is the fiction he wrote. Interrupting the biographical flow, therefore, are discrete chapters — perhaps half the entire text — devoted to the historical and philosophical context, genesis, composition, and implications of each of the novels.

Inevitably, this dialectic structure impedes smoothness. For example, a surprising reference to the disappointing reception of *The Idiot* turns up 40 pages after we have finished this novel, in a later chapter on *The Eternal Husband*.

Frank's most intriguing revelations concern *The Devils*. In the chapter Dostoevsky submitted to Katkov, Stavrogin confesses to a priest his darkest secret: that he had once molested a child. Katkov obdurately refused to print this, so Dostoevsky was constrained to recast not merely that episode but, with less than full success, subsequent chapters as well. These revisions go far to account for the problematic, unresolved nature of Stavrogin's characterization.

Subscribers to *The Russian Messenger* in 1868 surely got their money's worth: in alternate issues, chapters of *War and Peace* and *Crime and Punishment* were printed. After reading about half of Tolstoy's masterpiece, Dostoevsky's praise of Tolstoy's work (in a letter to his friend Maikov) was measured but penetrating: "It seems to me to be quite a major work, although unfortunately it has too many psychological details. I wish there were fewer of them. On the other hand, though, perhaps just because of these details it has so many good things." The two geniuses never met in person.

Not so Turgenev, whom Dostoevsky knew and admired when he was younger but whom he ridiculed unmercifully as the decadent Karmazinov (*The Devils*).

Unlike Tolstoy and Turgenev, however, Dostoevsky must stick in the throat of Jewish readers. Not merely reactionary, his correspondence confirms not so much the depth as the pervasiveness of his anti-semitism. Curiously, however, in his published work Dostoevsky depicted only one Jewish character in any detail: buffoonish Isai Fomitch Bumstein in *The House of the Dead*, whom he recalls with surprising

(Continued on page 26)

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Russian Miracles



Chekhov and Tolstoy in 1901.

STORIES OF WOMEN by Anton Chekhov. Translated by Paula Ross. Amherst NY, Prometheus Books. 308pp. \$28.95 (hardback), \$15.95 (paperback). **RUSSIAN NIGHTMARES, AMERICAN DREAMS** by Edith Suposnik Kaplan. Rego Park, NY, the Solomon Press. 144pp. Price not stated. **FOR TWO AND A HALF YEARS UNDER AND WITH THE SOVIETS** by Henry Lantner. New York, Vantage Press. 99pp. \$13.95.

By Meir Ronnen

One of the world's most extraordinary cultural miracles was the sudden flowering of poetry and literature in 19th century Czarist Russia, the last truly feudal regime in Europe. The father of Anton Chekhov (1860-1904) was born a serf.

Nearly all the rich mass of Russian literature has been translated into English and has long been the subject of scholarly study in the West. And of course it provided the foundation for 20th century Russian culture, which still managed to flourish despite continued upheavals and brutal repressions.

But for non-Russian readers, translations are only half a loaf; the flavor of the originals remains ephemeral. "A chicken is not a bird and a woman is not a man," goes an old Russian saying quoted in this new collection of Chekhov's stories, 12 of which are rendered into English for the first time. The blurb claims that Ross's translations put a fresh slant on Chekhov.

Like Saul Bellow in his irritating translation of Isaac Bashevis Singer's *Glump the Fool*, Ross makes the mistake of inserting 20th century Americanisms into some of these 19th century stories. In general, Ross's welcome volume maintains the 19th century Russian flavor. This makes her

occasional use of words like wimp stand out even more; they at once ruin the atmosphere. And what was the purpose of changing the title of one of the most famous of Chekhov's stories to "The Sweetie" instead of "The Darling"? Actually, neither fits the bill. The original, *Dushichka*, means someone who is goodhearted to a fault, which is also the point of the story. Even a still unsatisfactory "Goody," or "Goodie-Goody," would have been better.

Chekhov, a self-made man and a medical practitioner, was in a unique position to observe what really went on between husbands and wives. While this worthwhile edition is touted as a feminist collection pointing up the plight of wives in a backward male society, Chekhov was actually at pains to point up their great power over men and the way they often took revenge on them. Chekhov's women are just as awful as his men. Here I feel a strong link to the stories of Bashevis Singer. I'll bet Singer read Chekhov again and again.

THE HOLOCAUST has overshadowed the sufferings of East European Jews in slightly earlier times. Just how horrible they were is vividly recounted by Edith Yahudi Saposnik, who was born in the Ukrainian village of Varovitch in 1910. This wretchedly primitive hamlet had about 100 Christian families and about 20 Jewish ones, both communities being dependent on each other. The Jews were the most vulnerable: they relied on the peasants for food and were at the mercy of every bandit gang and paramilitary civil war force that passed their way. They were mugged, beaten up, raped or murdered; or died of typhoid or TB in their unsanitary localities. This account of their daily life and how Edith and some of her family escaped via Chernobyl (which seemed a paradise at the time) to Poland and then to America, has the quality of an epic, despite the fact that it was written primarily as a family history and also a description of how Edith stayed in America, then married and survived the premature death of her husband. So it's not an untypical American story too. I found it hard to put down.

HENRY LANTNER's account of his flight east from Soviet-occupied Poland to Uzbekistan in order to escape the advancing Nazis is matter of fact but also fascinating; indeed, it is also the story of many Polish Jews who managed to make themselves useful in Soviet wartime production until they were allowed to enlist in the newly formed Polish Liberation Army.

Lantner the young refugee was initially helped by various Jewish officers in the dreaded NKVD and even did some admittedly distasteful work for them, briefly helping to round up innocent ethnic Germans for deportation to Siberia. Lantner describes how both Russians and refugees survived thanks to the Soviet policy of supplying *kipatki*, free hot drinking water, at every railway station. This was used to prepare hot drinks and bread mash. *Kipatki* is vividly remembered by all refugees of the period. I serve it to a friend of mine who grew up in Siberia during the war and who says that it is still her favorite drink. Lantner eventually escaped the bear hug by getting himself included in a detachment of Polish soldiers who were transferred from General Anders's forces to bolster General Sikorski's Free Poles in Britain (Sikorski had too many officers and not enough enlisted men). A Scottish-trained engineer, the author now lives in Israel.

because in Manea's Romania no one is what he appears; everyone seems to be informing on everyone else, and trust is the ultimate deception. Certainly the characters can't trust the past, which contains a history no one wishes to believe. As for the future — well, perhaps the murder of Ceausescu was merely an expression of Romanian self-loathing.

Tolea eventually determines that the black envelope that drove his father to his death contained an expression of eternal animosity towards Jews. This only confirms what Tolea has learned along his dreamy, circular way to that revelation: that, under their oppression, all Romanians had "become Jews." There may be something in that, although it is not a notion likely to please either Romanians or Jews.

The *Black Envelope* is a rich if elusive literary work, thought-provoking in its ruminations on history and especially on the comparative monstrosities of the Austrian painter, the Georgian priest and Romania's own Great Jabberer, and at times somewhat bewildering as it plumbs the depths of a nation's psyche.

Like Kafka and Burroughs, Manea has his share of black humor (The Council for Model Culture and Disabled Education, The Committee for Neurotic Refugees, The Office for Thought Security). But none of this undercuts the book's pervasive sadness. The chief redeeming feature for the reader is in acknowledging the liberation of its author.

Offensive Waugh

EVELYN WAUGH: A Biography by Selina Hastings. New York, Houghton Mifflin. 724 pp. \$40.

By J.P. Donleavy

I write these words from a fast up-and-coming European country called Ireland and from a house haunted by the ghost of James Joyce, who once visited here. And haunted too by other literary gentlemen who roamed along these verdant byways of Westmeath, namely Evelyn Waugh, who actually thought of buying my home and who is the present subject of this quite marvelous biography by Selina Hastings.

On the jacket cover, Waugh stares at you with no-nonsense eyes. But his life was in fact a kaleidoscope of roles. Waugh emerged from each phase an entirely new and different person: naughty school boy, officer and gentleman and finally the reclusive squire puffing cigars and quaffing after-dinner port on his country estate.

Hastings depicts Waugh's life so vividly that one can nearly hear his best eccentric aristocratic vowels issuing de rigueur insults toward the many he thought so deserving around him: "I'll abbreviate thank you not to morally or intellectually muck about with me, you low cur."

juxtaposed with male friends, there are Waugh's lifelong platonic friendships with highly intelligent and beautiful women as well as an elaborate documenting of his public school homosexuality, the latter being done in such a subtle way as to portray Waugh as the eventual practicing heterosexual he was to become.

And then, as immensely important as such things are to Europeans, every step in the awakening and honing of Waugh's lifelong snobberies is documented, as he and Frank Pakenham, later Earl of Longford, "climbed the slopes of London society together" to comport in patrician circles. We see, through both text and photographs, an ellipsis of a kind that knows no rival: tweeds, walking sticks, fox hunting kit, and poses on the stoops of stately homes in leather boots and shiny black bowlers, along with suitable facial expressions to reflect the splendor.

Although Waugh took on these appurtenances of the upper crust, he was no real snob — as a snob no real author can afford to be. And he did in this regard as a writer make it known that "I reserve the right to deal with the people I know best." Which indeed to know them even better, one supposes also involved the celebration of the self-indulgent: smoking and drinking to excess, remaining unbothered by the physically unfit and delighting in the epicurean.

Although missing out on serious shooting and fishing, it was clearly advantageous for Waugh to maintain a patrician binn that suited his notions of superiority, and thus, as Hastings writes, he "assumed a part that much appealed to him as that of landed country gentleman." Waugh even maintained that he would have liked "to have been descended from a useless Lord." But when he married



ried his second wife Laura, his in-laws the Herberts found "disturbingly vulgar his exaggerated admiration for the upper classes."

Now then, I don't know who anymore, across the United States (where an ascent from no-account beginnings may be sung from the rooftops), gives much of a fig in the matters of social standing and climbing. But Hastings's account of the agony and bitter peril encountered by those Europeans who attempt to step up a notch, as well as the doom for those who try and don't succeed, will surely encourage those born and bred on the American continent to count their blessings.

Hastings makes amply clear why Waugh has attracted so much scrutiny as to his social credentials, which weren't in fact, seen from an American point of view, half bad. Damn decent in fact. However, as one has already averred, authors must embrace all of the social world and thus cannot afford to be snobs or social climbers; one might instead say that for his practical day to day use, Waugh merely posed as one. In any event, in these pages there is more than enough evidence for readers to form their own opinions.

Ah but then, my goodness, just as one has established

Waugh's credentials as a gentleman, comes an odd bomb shell: Waugh might have had an exaggerated admiration for the upper classes, but he could take liberties with and even be destructive and unkind of the impression he made upon the kaleidoscopic array of your upper-echelon characters of the time.

Staying as a guest of his friend Alistair Graham at Barford country house, for instance, Waugh ripped out the Africa page of their big *Times* atlas. This ungentle act would have to be regarded as not the behavior of a gentleman and such news getting around could put paid to your social climbing for all time. As it did instantly with Graham's mother, a very proper American from Savannah, Georgia.

This tome is unobtrusively packed with facts and so many vivid descriptions that again and again one has to glance at Selina Hastings's youthful author photograph to know that she could not have been there. In the stories unfolding of travel, university and his later squararchical existence, all serve as brilliantly wonderful explanations if not an apology for Waugh's churlishness and for the life led then: Where your once hysterically pukka vowels were the prow by which you pierced your way to succeed and alerted others to your esteem. Now they are no longer proclaimed aloud, except perhaps in the dustier corners of your better clubs, making this not so distant past enlightening to read today, when America's "power" accent has the last word, and culturally conquers all.

Waugh has to be your genuine eccentric. While eager to join the war against Hitler (he served as an officer throughout World War II), he spent much of his time dining and seeing old friends; Hastings gives brilliantly amusing descriptions of his close combat with boredom and some of the best renditions of English one-upmanship that can be found. While known to be brave, he was perhaps the only man in military history who was thought by his senior officers to be too rude and offensive to be allowed to go into battle.

After the war, Waugh retained his reputation in America, where he spread his incivility from coast to coast. One would have liked to have been eavesdropping when he paid his visits to Forest Lawn Memorial Park, certainly one of America's most astonishing places, as can be seen in Waugh's magical account of its existence, *The Loved One*.

Finally, we find Waugh, his entry into the world of the landed gentry secured, living in the country house surrounded by your few sylvan acres — perhaps without the mile-long entry drive and the agreeable vista of parklands viewed from a stately home's millioned windows, but nevertheless a reasonable resemblance to a lordly abode. One could also find him at White's, the kind of tony London club where members took their satisfaction on rainy days by gazing out the club windows at the passing damn public getting wet. Hastings must know more than a few club men, for she vividly evokes the ennobling contentment and comfort to be found in such precincts. A refuge which Waugh more and more sought and seemed deeply to enjoy in later life, and why not? Where a gent in blissfully male exclusivity could pleasantly contemplate his self-esteem and where, over his second gin and tonic, had he the imagination, could let wander his reverie.

(The Los Angeles Times)

Denial and Deception

THE BLACK ENVELOPE by Norman Manea. Translated from the Romanian by Patrick Camiller. New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 329 pp., \$25.

By S.T. Meravi

The collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe ignited many hopes both there and in the West. High on our personal list was, Will it be good for the Jews? A little further down came the question, Will it be good for literature?

The jury is still out. But at least for the Romanian Jewish writer Norman Manea, things have been looking up. Since leaving Bucharest and resettling in New York in 1986, he's published several books, most notably *Compulsory Happiness*, a collection of four novellas, and *On Clowns*, which won the National Jewish Book Award. He's also received a Cuggenheim fellowship and a MacArthur ("Genius") grant.

No doubt among Manea's most gratifying achievements is the publication, albeit in the West, of *The Black Envelope*, which until now had been published only in Romania and only in an insanely censored edition.

Indeed, Manea's essay in *Clowns* on the censoring of *The Black Envelope* makes it clear that the version that appeared in Romania in 1986 was thoroughly gutted. Manea managed to maintain a modicum of integrity in the book by slipping some points by in coded form. But by the end of the same year, the butchered book, plus the fact that it sold well and was praised in official literary journals, all helped to drive Manea into exile.

The remarkable thing is that any version of *The Black Envelope* was allowed to appear in Romania. Its mere tone and atmosphere clearly evoke the soul-destroying political system under which Romanians had for so long suffered. The book has been called, perhaps unsurprisingly, Kafkaesque, but to this reader *The Black Envelope* more readily brought to mind the political paranoia of William S. Burroughs.

Among the Eastern bloc regimes Romania was always something of a special case, possibly outstripping its sister states in denial and deception. In convincing the West that Romania steered a course "independent" of the Soviet Union, President Ceausescu, a totalitarian thug of the first order, projected the illusion of a progressive fellow who favored human rights and free trade. Israelis, for one, did

not complain, because Romania long remained their sole open door to the Communist world (an arrangement permitted for Ceausescu's own venal purposes).

But Romanians themselves knew better. Small wonder that when the Iron Curtain was abruptly lowered and taken to the cleaners, it was only Romania of all the East European countries that threw its leader (and his wife) up against a wall for summary execution.

As *The Black Envelope* makes clear, Romania toted a lot of special baggage. The country after all at one time had been an enthusiastic ally of Nazi Germany, only to see its own fascist government superseded by a no less totalitarian and terrorizing communist regime. Maintaining sanity, not to mention anything like integrity, in such a situation requires a lot of deception and self-deception, if not downright amnesia.

The central character of Manea's novel is Anatol Vancea, a Jew and a truth-seeker. A one-time professor now relegated to working as a hotel clerk, Tolea is obsessed with uncovering the contents of a mysterious letter that during the Nazi period brought about his father's death.

His one apparent ally in this search is a guilt-ridden former journalist/propagandist named Matei Gaton. I say apparent

Up to Maggots

WISHING ON TRAINS by Alison Lowry. London, Heinemann. 469 pp. £14.99.

By Wendy Elliman

An editor for Penguin, South Africa, Lowry is a powerful and evocative storyteller, with a thumping good tale to tell.

Wishing on Trains is Lowry's second novel. It is crowded with people (five of them introduced in its first eight lines), and with color, images, sounds and smells. Cape Town and the surrounding countryside materialize off the page, carrying the plot forward along with them. "Outside the window, a tug was moving slowly out of harbor. In its wake some tatty grey seagulls bobbed on the greasy water amid a flotilla of fruit peels and plastic bags moving up and down on the choppy waves. Two colored men were working a huge coil of rope around an iron bollard. The rope was brown and as thick as a man's thigh and neither man could get a grip on it."

Woven around this central strand are the stories of those obsessed by Michaela:

The rope reminds Michaela, the heroine, of the time her brother learned to tie knots in the Cubs, and how, that summer, "the cousins had played hangman with a ferociousness that frightened them."

It is that summer 20 years earlier which lies at the heart of the book. A long-hidden childhood trick, careless and vicious, surfaces, threatening to destroy Michaela (like Lowry, a widowed editor with a daughter) and perhaps drag down her brother and her two cousins as well.

Layers are carefully peeled back. Lowry demands an alert, intelligent reader. She drops hints, leads you on and shares her secrets, bit by bit. Nothing is fed off a spoon. You work to know her characters, as you work to know real people. The story is essentially one of obsession, but it is obsession in many layers. At the hub is Michaela, self-assured and self-centered, stalked by her childhood cruelty. "Had she really spent all of her adult life so far harboring a secret in her gut like a maggot, feeding on her and growing until it threatened to take over her life?"

Woven around this central strand are the stories of those obsessed by Michaela:

her cousin Pauline, unable to compete, trying instead to please — and, in doing so, betraying first her parents and then herself; Michaela's younger brother Janus, hiding his true self in terror that Michaela will discover him and despise him; and her cousin Antony, a gifted photographer, emotionally and sexually tied to Michaela, who chooses to live his life at a remove, through the far side of a camera lens.

Lowry draws her characters, major and minor, deftly. This is how, for example, she introduces Michaela's aunt: "Helena, who had multiple sclerosis and had written two books on the subject, had a new wheelchair. It was a splendid affair with spangled scarlet wheelrims, the chrome parts painted an irreverent metallic blue." Each of Lowry's characters rings true. They talk and think like people you know, and, time and again, their thoughts and feelings echo yours.

Post-apartheid South Africa cradles the events. The book is not so much about the country as of it. Pauline's boyfriend, a brutal and racist Afrikaaner, is an ugly reminder of the savage past from which the country has broken free. Pauline's parents, old apartheid fighters who fled the country hours ahead of the Special Branch, return. "David was slightly stooped now, but he still wore his uniform baggy corduroys and loose cardigan with

big buttons. Harriet had put on weight and her grey hair was cut short. Her suit was creased from hours in the plane. Michaela could see an edge of her petticoat sticking out. They did not look like political exiles. They looked like somebody's parents out for a summer holiday." Michaela and her whole extended family are long-time liberals, but when a mixed-race marriage is proposed within the family they are all uneasy. "The trouble was, nobody could get past the bald fact of Frans's colour and social status... Nobody could get to grips with the objections without revealing themselves in an unattractive light."

Despite the gathering menace of the story as the past threatens to engulf the present, despite its increasingly somber images and its painful ending, Lowry writes with humor. For example, Michaela, feeling less and less enthusiastic about her lover, gets "out of bed at two in the morning, picking Simon's arms off her, first one and then the other, and folding them across his chest like a monk on his death bed."

Wishing on Trains is the kind of book that you want to start reading over as soon as you finish it — both for its language ("Her long hair was a dark nest of eels round her shoulders") and to enjoy again the intricately woven events and characters that swell together into the final crescendo.

Dostoevsky

(Continued from page 23)
affection. A possible clue to this ambivalence appeared in an earlier volume where Frank analyzed how Dostoevsky, after his famous mock execution in a Siberian prison, underwent a kind of conversion from radicalism to an ethnocentric faith in the common Russian people as an embodiment of the human image of Christ. If (as he felt) they were capable of forgiving their exploiters, of espousing an ethic of love, perhaps their new-born disciple experienced a measure of inner turmoil and creative resistance in trying to exploit his unquestioned Jew-hatred artistically.

Similarly, a letter to Katkov (April 1866) suggests what might be viewed as a temperamental incapacity for consciously inflicting pain on others. After the failure of the attempted assassination of Tsar Alexander II, Katkov's attacks on nihilists were relentless. Dostoevsky agreed in principle, of course, but drawing upon his own revolutionary past, his outrage was sentimentally deflected from outright condemnation into "sorrow and pity for all the innocents who are being misled by such doctrines." Distinctions of this sort tended to mitigate the virulence of his hatred, if not of peoples then of individuals.

In the current volume, virtually every reference in his correspondence to "Zhids" is connected with money. For example, after the writer had lost all his money and his return train ticket, and had even pawned his watch to the God of (Instant) Fortune, he penned a remorseful, highly suggestive letter to Sofya, his niece. In it he links the repulsiveness of Jews to the allure of gambling, thus enabling him to justify his failure at the wheel. "Here is my definitive observation, Sofya: if one is prudent, that is, if one is ... cold, and inhumanly cautious, then definitely, without any doubt, one can win as much as one wishes." Over the years Dostoevsky enjoyed stretches of such composure, but in the end always reverted to type: the impulsive Russian, the man of heart. On this occasion it was a Jew who played with "horrible, inhuman composure" and "raked in the money."

This Hamburg Jew was echoed by the mercenary French characters in *The Gambler*. Whereas the Russian loses, the Frenchman gamblers great sums. "Roulette," Aleksei declares, "is simply made for Russians" to lose at. Why? "The faculty of amassing capital has become... virtually the main point in the catechism of virtues and qualities of civilized Western man." The Russian's saving grace is precisely that he has never learned it. On the evidence of *Volume Four*, it seems arguable whether Dostoevsky's hatred of Jews was nearly as intense as his hatred of Germans, Poles, or even the French. In the end it may be more accurate and useful to view Dostoevsky less as a single-minded anti-semitic than as an all-around xenophobe who, as Cole Porter might have had it, when not near the persons he hated, hated the persons that were near. The fact is that back in Russia in the 1870s, his final years, Dostoevsky's antisemitism intensified.

A final Jewish angle in this volume surfaces when Frank reminds us that Dostoevsky could be very superstitious, a believer in premonitions. Once in Weisbaden, after losing all his money in the casino, he wanted to see a priest, but in the dark what he thought was an Orthodox church turned out to be a synagogue. "It was as though I had had cold water thrown over me," he wrote to Anna. "I came running home." Shortly afterwards, following four years of his grumbling about the degeneracy of Western Europe, the Dostoevskys made their way back to Russia. His greatest, most multifaceted work lay ahead. Perhaps the next and final volume of what must be counted one of the most ambitious literary biographies of our time will tempt me to open its pages again. ■



Dan Laor, 'S.Y. Agnon: New Perspectives,' Sifriat Poalim

READING FROM RIGHT TO LEFT

BY JEFF GREEN

Yitzhak Laor is a poet, novelist, critic and political commentator, highly respected by the intellectual establishment because of his literary talent, intelligence, erudition and uncompromising stands.

Hakibbutz Hameuchad recently published a collection of his literary essays entitled *Ami Kivrim Otach Moleket*. The title literally means "We Write You, O Homeland," an ironic twist on the sort of poetry read out loud in school ceremonies on memorial days, though Laor chooses to call the book *Narratives with No Natives* in English, a title which also conveys his political approach: the view that Western culture in general and Israeli culture in particular is intrinsically colonialist and suppresses the identities of people who are known, in this critical vocabulary, as "The Other." This rubric covers local "minorities" (including women, who, of course, are not numerically a minority), as well as colonized peoples.

The trend of criticism taken up by Laor claims that every culture imposes what it calls a "discourse" on its members, a repressive consensus or repertoire of ideas from within which it is impossible to challenge the hegemony of that culture.

Generally it is easy for us to notice this phenomenon from far off. For example, we are not upset by the notion that in medieval Christian Europe people were constrained to think in medieval Christian terms because there were none other available. However, we bridle at the notion that our own thinking is trammelled by a form of "discourse" that prevents us from challenging (or even discovering) our own basic notions about what the world is and

should be — and this is precisely what Laor seeks to demonstrate.

His approach is uncompromisingly radical. He argues, for example, that the literary conventions which we call "realism" are, in fact, devices to prevent us from understanding that we are not truly free to think or to define ourselves. He maintains that striving to achieve freedom should be the first and foremost goal of all creative activity, and finds that very few local writers pass muster when measured against this demanding standard.

He regards the dominant discourse of the Israeli consensus as particularly oppressive because it has been so intensely occupied with state and nation building, with (as he sees it) the suppression and oppression of minority cultures (Arab and Oriental Jewish), and, worst of all in his view, with the creation of a militaristic national mythos at the expense of historical truth.

From this point of departure he reinterprets several writers who have set the tone in modern Israeli literature, including the novelists Amos Oz and A.B. Yehoshua, and the poet Nathan Alterman.

Laor's essays demand close familiarity with the material they discuss and are written in dense, unfriendly prose. He reproaches the critic Dan Miron, for example, for writing "out of identification with the community, with its values, out of an a priori renunciation of an expansion of the context of 'the possible,' of 'the hypothetical,' of the potential (unrealized) found in heresy, even if such heresy does not exist."

The best argument against Laor is the simple fact that his ideas are not suppressed, but, in effect, ignored. He is given more than a fair hearing, and few people heed him. His novel, *Am, Ma'achal Melachim* ("The Nation, Food Fit for Kings") was published in one of the most prestigious of the country's literary series and received acclamatory reviews in influential newspapers like *Ha'aretz*. It has not, however, reached a large audience, since it is virtually impossible to read with pleasure (unlike, for example, *Gravity's Rainbow*, the 1960s classic novel by the

American writer Thomas Pynchon to which it bears some similarity).

Laor's essays and political articles are also published prominently. He fails to convince the public that he is right, however, mainly because he arrogantly ignores the elementary task of communication.

His political articles take an attitude of such uncompromising moral purity in their reproaches against Israel that no one can live with that position. Indeed, they are clearly intended to be unrealistic, since Laor views "realism" as tyrannical. Nonetheless they are trapped in an infinite regress like a hall of mirrors: In order to criticize the prevalent version of realism, one must create an alternative, which by its inner logic will be as tyrannical as that which it replaces, and so on.

DAN LAOR, a professor of Hebrew literature and not, as far as I know, related to Yitzhak, has written a very different type of book about literature. *Shai Agnon: Hebetim Hadashim* ("S.Y. Agnon: New Perspectives"), published by Sifriat Poalim, contains seven informative essays about Agnon and his work. Laor is in the final stages of writing a biography of Agnon, the most important Hebrew writer of the 20th century, and this book clearly bears the mark of that enterprise. His topics include, "S.Y. Agnon's Zionism," "Did Agnon Write about the Holocaust?" and "Agnon as an Example and Object of Reference in Recent Hebrew Literature." Laor writes clearly and is committed to getting the names, dates, and places straight.

By placing Agnon in this seemingly prosaic context, he helps us appreciate the amazing power of Agnon's literary imagination. Agnon is a paradigm of the imaginative freedom that Yitzhak Laor calls for, a stunning example of a creative genius who chose to write out of commitment to what appears to be a rigid religious tradition and to recreate and commemorate that tradition in his writing.

Dan Laor's first article maps out the publication history of Agnon's work. Agnon oversaw what has become the canonical edition of his work, printed by Schocken in 1953. In his later years Agnon wrote intensely and prolifically, publishing widely in periodicals, but he was apparently reluctant to spend time gathering his own writing in further books.

Since his death in 1970, his daughter, Amuna Yaron, with the help of others, has been collecting and publishing his work, so that today the posthumously published writings are more voluminous than the collected works published during the author's lifetime. For readers and scholars this creates something of an interpretive dilemma, since one cannot know to what degree the posthumous volumes reflect the author's intentions.

Atem Re'item ("You Have Seen"), published by Schocken, is the 13th posthumous volume. The title comes from Exodus 20:22: "You have seen that I have talked with you from heaven," for Agnon's subject is divine revelation. Similar to *Yamim Noraim*, the volume for the High Holy Days, this is an anthology for Shavuot consisting of quotations from a vast range of traditional Jewish sources. It takes 11 pages to list them all at the end of this 567-page volume. They are grouped in four long sections: "The Giving of the Torah," "The Ten Commandments," "The Tablet of Your Heart," and "On the Torah." The first section was originally published in 1959, and the others were added now by his literary executors.

With this aid of the detailed table of contents, one can find sayings and stories on specific topics such as the Ark or each of the Ten Commandments, or one can simply drift through the book, reading with delight wherever the eye lights. Agnon explains that the basis of his book is *parashat* (literal meaning), *remez* (allegory), *drash* (literal meaning), *and* (mystical meaning). He has translated all the Aramaic sources into Hebrew and edited them slightly, leaving the flavor of the original intact.

Imperatively Happy

LEAVING SOULS: Rabbi Menachem Mendel and the Spirit of Kotzk by Chaim Feinberg. New York, Klav Publishing House, Inc. 174 pp. \$19.95.

THE LIFE AND THOUGHT OF RABBI MENDEL OF KOTZK: God's Angel Rebel by Rabbi Jacob Shitlil. 2900 Cliff Rd., Pepper Pike, Ohio 44124. \$10.

THROUGH THE FIRE AND WATER: The Life of Reb Noson of Breslov by Chaim Kramer. Jerusalem, Breslov Research Institute. 779 pp. Price not stated.

ETERNALLY YOURS: The Collected Letters of Reb Noson of Breslov Vol. I compiled by Yacov Gable. Jerusalem, Breslov Research Institute. 400 pp. Price not stated.

By Reuven Ben Dov

I have to admit it. The Kotzker Rebbe frightens and fascinates me. His single-minded zeal for absolute truth, disdain for externals, and locking himself away in his room in his later years cry out for explanation. A few have tried to try, but none with the sensitivity

and beauty of Chaim Feinberg. His analytic exposition shines through a prism of poetic metaphor.

We are gently led on a journey of discovery of the Kotzker's views on such subjects as holiness, ego, humility, faith, doubt, fear of heaven, spiritual attention and *shiva*. A few examples will suffice. How to achieve self-recognition, to touch and activate "the inner point"? Feinberg writes that "under all the layers of tired routine, mimicry and monstrous appetite lies a unique hidden spiritual center. God-awareness jars the inner point awake, but only if it is practised obsessively, unrelentingly, from the first flutter of the eyelid each morning."

The Kotzker attacked our spiritual laziness and our tendency, as Feinberg observes, to sit egg-like, full of the yolk of potential but undeveloped. This book includes many famous and less famous aphorisms and stories from his disciples, for the Kotzker never wrote himself.

There is no room for compromise, vagueness, materialism, and honor in the teachings of Kotzk. Imitation is *treif*; we must learn who we are in order to be original.

The author only became religious at age 33, and was sadly stricken with cancer

when 49. Despite physical pain, he decided to write this book, and so his thoughts and faith live on to inspire us. If you want a quick "fix" on Kotzk ideas, you can read a highly condensed version in a booklet written by Rabbi Jacob Shitlil. In some 40 pages you will get a taste, which hopefully will whet your appetite for more.

THE KOTZKER Rebbe did not produce a dynasty; similarly, Rebbe Nachman of Bratslav left no successor, but his teachings are alive and well today thanks to his books, and those of his disciple Reb Noson. Over 25 books in English have been published, some translations of classical works, some booklets, and a few overviews of some Bratslav teachings. Recently a magnum opus of nearly 800 pages, *Through Fire and Water*, was produced. It describes the life of Reb Noson.

When I first saw the book I assumed it would be of interest only to Bratslav hasidim. I was wrong. It's easy to read, which is perhaps to be expected since it was written by Chaim Kramer, the author of *Crossing The Narrow Bridge*. There is a wealth of historical information, and more than a flavor of Bratslav philosophy to give

food for thought. However, I would not recommend this book till you have read some of the other publications on Bratslav thought, such as *The Narrow Bridge*, or *Under The Table*.

I HAVE similar views on *Eternally Yours*, the collected writings of Reb Noson. But in this case, although there is a lot of repetition, it is possible to acquire more ideas in less time. It was fascinating to have the opportunity to read the private correspondence of a deeply pious hassidic Jew who was a living textbook. Nearly every sentence is permeated with faith, thanksgiving and hope.

Reb Noson's son was constantly reminded not to focus on what he lacked, but to act happy in order eventually to become happy, and to choose to divert his thoughts from pain and suffering by learning, praying, and doing good deeds. Applying the lesson to ourselves, we should joke and dance every day, and even act silly sometimes. We should view ourselves as literally created anew at each and every moment. Our learning will then be fresh and exciting.

We must also persist in strengthening ourselves with joy and gladness, and so turn all the groaning and sighing into joy. Each day we must search for the good points that are in us, and be joyful over them. "Don't worry, be happy" is a theme of most of the letters. ■

Highflier

W.D.A. BY NIGHT, THROUGH HAZE AND FOG by Yehuda Taidon-Chaito. Or Yehuda, Ma'ariv Book Club. 303 pp. Price not stated.

By Martin van Creveld

For those who do not know — among them, I am afraid, this reviewer, until he read the book — Yehuda Taidon-Chaito was a Knesset member for Tel Aviv from 1988 to 1992. Previously he had been

chairman who sold computers to South Africa and to Latin America; an industrialist who manufactured various kinds of industrial equipment as well as the cockpit for the Israeli-built Nesher fighter bomber; an Air Force officer responsible for equipment; a pilot and Vautour squadron commander; and a member of the Palmach's Naval Department. By any standards a long, varied, and extremely interesting career.

But if the career is outstanding, Taidon's modesty is not. To hear him tell it, he almost single-handedly orga-

nized the illegal immigrants detained by the British on Cyprus in 1947, conducting several acts of sabotage as well. Also single-handedly he established and commanded the Israeli Air Force's first night-fighter squadron, whose motto he uses as the title of the book; predicted the 1967 air strike against Egypt, and designed the special parachute-guided rocket-assisted bomb that broke up the Arab air forces' runways in 1967. Forced to leave the IAF after a disagreement with his superiors, he ran into trouble when he insisted that Israel should build a copy of the French Vautour rather than the Mirage V.

And so on and on, down to 1991 when he was the only Israeli representative at the Madrid Peace Conference worth his salt. For 40 years, each time a problem arose, Taidon was in the right and knew just what to do. Unfortunately, though, all too often there were obtuse opponents who stood in his way and obstructed his plans.

The cheater apart — Taidon's particular *bête noire* is Israel Aircraft Industries — those opponents fell into two types. First, there were "civil servants" who stressed political considerations over technical and commercial ones, thus distorting the "free economy" and obtaining results that were not as good as they could have been. Then there were fellow officers, among them several of Taidon's superiors, whose technical grasp did not match his and who failed to see the excellence of his plans. None of his opponents could keep up with the author's "logical" brain. (Also, unlike most

Israelis, he was capable of absorbing vast quantities of alcohol without getting drunk.)

The author's "Cartesian" mind is particularly in evidence when he explains his ideas on foreign policy and war. Back in 1957 he concluded that "nuclear war" (meaning war conducted under the threat of nuclear weapons, as the 1956 Sinai Campaign was) would be "short" — an idea which, given the three-year Korean War, was manifestly wrong even at the time. Since then there have been many wars, some of them quite long, e.g. the War of Attrition which lasted from 1968 to 1970. Yet Taidon, writing in the early 1990s, quotes the paper he produced over 30 years earlier as if it represented the acme of strategic wisdom.

Given the book's character — part self-advertisement, part childish reflections on subjects (such as nuclear weapons and Israeli-Syrian relations) about which the author knows nothing — one might well ask: what remains? The answer is, a surprising number of good yarns. For those who want to know how Taidon fought and tricked the British (without falling victim to the charms of several young ladies who tried to trap him on the way); piloted Meteor and Vautour aircraft at great risk to his life; explained the true significance of Israel to both Jews and Gentiles; and traveled all over Latin America — to such people the book has something to offer. Those who are interested in serious thought on war, business and politics, however, will do better to look elsewhere. ■

Gun Culture

ETERNAL PASSAGE by Erik Larson. New York, Crown Publishers. 272pp. \$21.

By Ralph Amelan

The ready availability of guns in the US and their annual bloody harvest have long ceased to be amusing.

There are some of the hard facts. The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms estimated that there were 66.7 million handguns in circulation in 1989, more than four times the total in 1960, and this was part of a total of 200 million firearms. In 1992 and 1993, handguns killed almost 10,000 Americans, more than the US Army lost in combat in Vietnam.

In 1993, 40 people in New York alone were killed by stray bullets. In *Eternal Passage*, journalist Erik Larson looks for the causes of this horror, and he does not have to look very hard to find them. Widespread gun ownership is bolstered by

the national myth of the frontiersman, the abundant manufacture of guns and ammunition, the ready availability of firearms to all without any requirement of training in their use, and with inadequate government control over their sale. Efforts at changing the law have to contend with the fierce and well-financed lobbying of the National Rifle Association (NRA) and a well-founded fear of violent crime (itself more frequent because of the availability of guns). The carnage is further increased by the widespread use of firearms by criminals, the lack of built-in safety devices in weapons, and accidents caused by children getting hold of their parents' inadequately guarded guns.

The centerpiece of Larson's hard-hitting account is a gruesome incident: a 16-year-old boy terrorized his high school with a semiautomatic handgun, killing a teacher. He would have killed more, had not the magazine he had chosen repeatedly jammed. Larson uses this as a jumping-off point for his examination of the murky world of the arms business: he even manages to set himself up in business as a licensed dealer, no questions asked.

In covering this well-trodden ground, however, Larson does come up with a few surprises. The Wild West of cinema and TV fame never existed. Frontier towns enjoyed an enviously low homicide rate: around 0.6 killings per year even in the more notorious places such as Dodge City.

Local papers editorialized indignantly about violent crime...in New York! "Hardly a day passes that some one does not receive an eternal quietus from some assassin," grumbled a Missouri newspaper.

The fabled heroes fall to pass close inspection. Wyatt Earp and Bat Masterson were known to the Dodge City locals as "the Fighting Pimps" and with reason: they were con-men and gamblers. Others, like Billy the Kid, were cut-throats or psychopaths, given to cutting their victims down from behind in ambush rather than in face-to-face combat.

The guns were nearly as dangerous to their owners as to their opponents. The fabled Colt Peacemaker was liable to fire when dropped and not to fire when the trigger was pulled. A replica made after the Second World War reproduced its qualities (or lack of them) so well that at last count it had accounted for at least 40 people, killed in accidents.

Larson also points out that the NRA was not always so vigorous in its determination to protect the Second Amendment. It was originally a sportsman's organization, concerned with target shooting and hunters' rights. But in 1977 a man called Harlan Carter took the helm and led it to battles with government over any type of gun control. Interestingly, over half its membership actually supports registration of handguns. But the NRA's turnover is high, and the

hard-core, who label gun-control advocates "fascists," have stayed in control.

The author is sanguine about the prospects for reform. His modest proposal involves much tighter controls over gun sales and dealers, and requires proficiency tests for people applying for gun ownership. At least on this last part he can use the Second Amendment against its most ardent defenders: the right "to keep and bear arms" is balanced by the requirement of a "well regulated Militia." But the chances for widely effective legislation are not good.

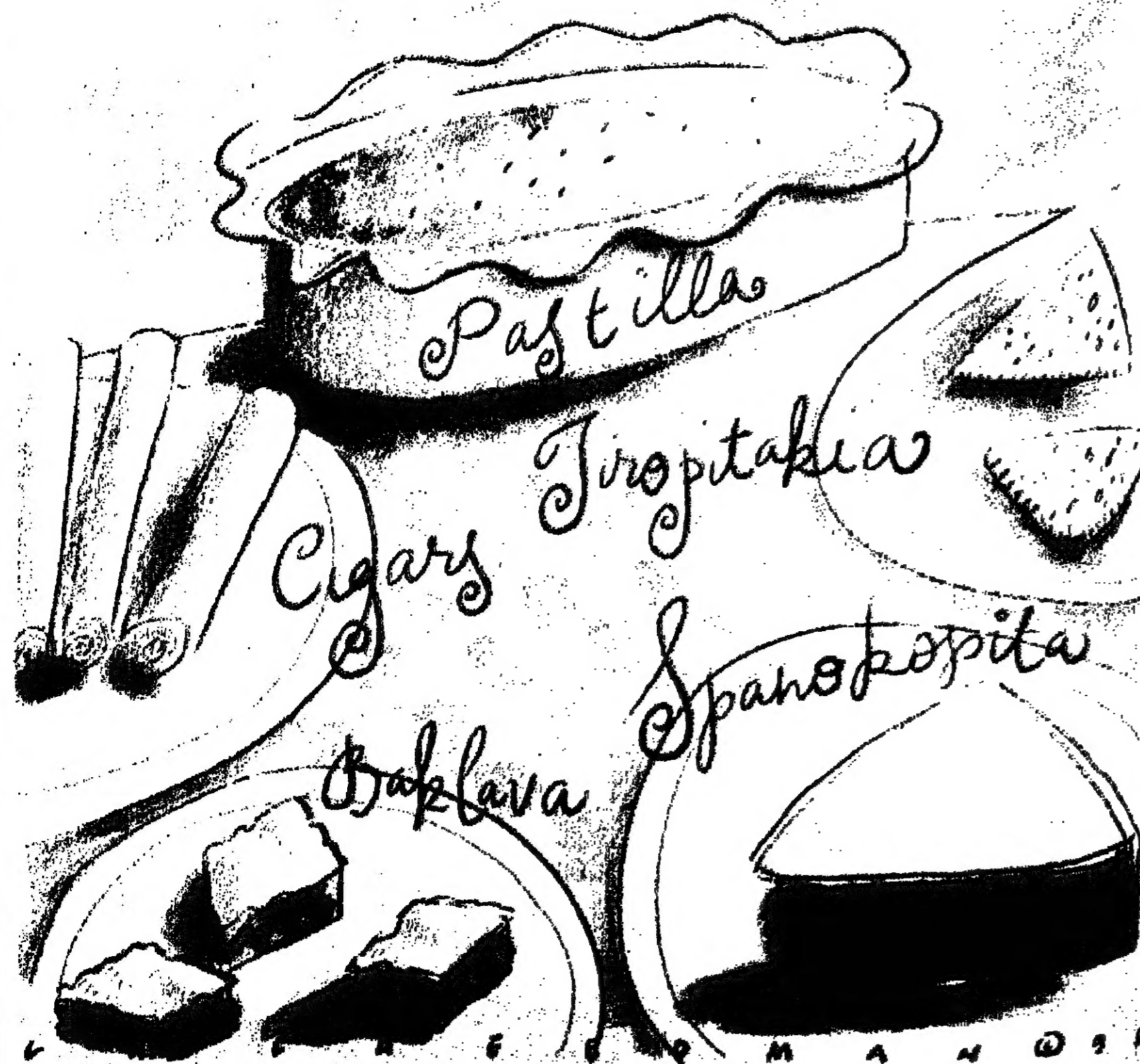
In Israel, gun control is not a burning political issue. The controls are tighter, and the army does teach a basic respect for firearms. Nonetheless there are occasional fatalities when soldiers play foolish games with their weapons.

During an attack in Jerusalem, when two terrorists rampaged down a street killing two before being killed themselves, the local police chief criticized people on the spot who hampered the work of the anti-terror squad by blazing away in all directions. Carrying a gun may not always be such a good idea.

Incidentally, the current NRA head, Wayne LaPierre, recently came out with a book that is doing well in the US. Its message is predictable. "Clearly, the Warsaw ghetto stands in history as a shining example of the dangers of gun control." So now we know. ■

JULY 14, 1995 27

By Your Leaves



Without phyllo dough, Middle Eastern cookery would be a poor shadow of itself. Known as *brik* to Tunisians, *yufka* to Turks, *fillo* to Egyptians, and as strudel dough to many Europeans and Americans, the paper-thin leaves of this dough are the basis for hundreds of different recipes.

Burekas, baklava, Moroccan cigars, Greek spinach pies, and Tunisian meat pies are just a few of the many delicious dishes that can be made with phyllo dough. The process involves making a dough that has to be kneaded for as long as two hours. The dough is then divided into small balls, kneaded again for an hour or so, and then pulled and stretched until it is almost transparent. The process has

By Daniel Rogov

made an acceptable apple strudel without phyllo. The only problem is that making phyllo leaves is an art form, one that takes far too much time and effort to be practical for most cooks. The process involves making a dough that has to be kneaded for as long as two hours. The dough is then divided into small balls, kneaded again for an hour or so, and then pulled and stretched until it is almost transparent. The process has

reduced quite a few amateur chefs to a state of quiet hysteria. It is not difficult to find ready-made phyllo dough. Many of the local bakery shops that use it on a regular basis will be glad to wrap it in plastic and sell you as many leaves as you like. If this is not convenient, you can purchase the commercially made phyllo that is made by Shahaf. Available in most supermarkets, the phyllo comes in packages containing between

20 and 25 sheets, each measuring 40 x 50 centimeters. These are well wrapped, easy to store and equally easy to use. The company boasts that its phyllo leaves, made with most impressive modern technology, contain no fat or oil, but this is a bit silly, because nearly every recipe for this kind of dough requires the generous buttering or oiling of each leaf before filling or rolling it. Several hints may prove useful to those who have not previously worked with phyllo. So long as the sheets remain in their sealed plastic bags they can be refrigerated or frozen until ready for use. Do not, however, refrigerate phyllo for more than a week and do not freeze it for more than three months, because after this the leaves will become soggy. Once the phyllo

bag has been opened, the sheets should be used quickly or they will become dry and brittle. Remove the dough from the refrigerator 30-45 minutes before use. When cutting sheets of phyllo, pile them one on top of the other, with no air between them. If the sheets must be left to stand for more than a few minutes, cover them with a slightly damp cloth to keep them from becoming dry and brittle. Keep in mind that most recipes using phyllo require cooking. They can then be transferred directly from the freezer into the oven without thawing. Unless you have a passion for dough that tastes like library paste, never cook or reheat phyllo in a microwave oven.

TIROPITAKIA

A traditional Greek recipe

For the filling:
1/2 cup feta cheese
1 cup Emmentaler or similar cheese, grated finely
85 gr. cream cheese (minimum fat content should be 18%)
2 eggs, lightly beaten
2 Tbsp. chopped parsley
1/2 tsp. pepper
1/4 tsp. nutmeg

For the pastry:
1 1/2 kilo phyllo leaves
3/4 cup butter, melted
1/2 cup sesame seeds
1 egg yolk, beaten lightly with 1 Tbsp. cold water

Make the filling in a bowl by mashing the feta cheese until it crumbles. Add the remaining ingredients for the filling and mix together thoroughly. Cut each phyllo leaf into a strip 15 x 30 cm. Brush each leaf with the melted butter. Fold the leaves lengthwise making strips 6 x 30 cm. Again brush with butter and place 1 Tbsp. of the filling at the bottom of each leaf.

Fold over to form a triangle and continue folding, buttering each fold, until the strip is completed. Repeat with each of the strips and place the completed triangles on a well-greased cookie tin.

Brush the tops of each triangle with butter and then with the egg yolk. Sprinkle over the sesame seeds and bake in an oven that has been preheated to 180°C until the pastries are golden brown and flaky (about 20-30 minutes). Serve hot or cool. Yields 16 to 24 pastries.

PASTILLA

A Moroccan recipe by Claudia Roden

4 pigeons or 1 large chicken
2 Tbsp. margarine
1 large onion, grated
salt and black pepper
1/2 tsp. ground ginger
1/4 tsp. powdered saffron (optional)
1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp. ground allspice
3 Tbsp. parsley, chopped finely
7-8 eggs
180 gr. margarine, melted
16 sheets phyllo pastry
1 Tbsp. sugar
1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
120 gr. almonds, chopped and sautéed in margarine
1 egg yolk, beaten
1/4 tsp. each cinnamon and sugar

Wash the birds well and then quarter them. Simmer in a small amount of water together with 2 Tbsp. margarine, the onion, seasonings and parsley until the stock is so tender that it falls off the bones (about 2 hours). Add more water if needed to keep the pot from drying out. When cooked, drain off the stock and reserve. Skin and bone the birds and cut the meat into small pieces.

Take about 150 ml. of the stock and beat

it together with the eggs. Season to taste with salt and pepper, pour into a small pan and stir over a very low heat until the mixture is creamy and nearly set.

Brush a round pie tin about 33 cm. in diameter and 4-5 cm. deep with the melted margarine. Fit a sheet of phyllo in the dish so that the ends fold well up and overlap the edges. If this is not possible, use overlapping sheets of phyllo.

Lay six sheets of pastry on top of each other, brushing each with melted margarine and sautéed almonds. Spread about half of the egg mixture over this and sprinkle with a little of the remaining stock. Cover with 4 more sheets of phyllo, brushing each with melted margarine.

Lay the pieces of boned fowl neatly on top and cover with the rest of the egg mixture. Sprinkle with a little more chicken stock. Cover with the remaining phyllo sheets, brushing each with melted margarine and then overlap the bottom sheets and the sides of the dish.

Brush the top of the pie with the beaten egg yolk and place in an oven that has been preheated to 160°C for 40 minutes. After that, raise the temperature to 200°C and bake until the pastry is crisp and the top a deep golden color (about 15 minutes longer).

Serve piping hot, sprinkled with sugar mixed with cinnamon. Serves four.



MOROCCAN CIGARS

A recipe by Claudia Roden

1/2 kilo phyllo leaves
1 medium onion, chopped finely
4 Tbsp. oil
750 gr. lean minced lamb or beef
2 tsp. cinnamon
1/2 tsp. allspice
salt and pepper to taste
pinch of cayenne pepper or more to taste
small bunch of coriander, chopped finely (optional)
5 eggs
180 gr. margarine, melted

In a small bowl let the onions soak in the oil for about 1 hour. Add the meat and crush with a fork. Add the seasonings and spices and cook, stirring with a wooden spoon until the meat is done (10-15 minutes). Add the herbs.

In a bowl lightly beat the eggs and pour them over the meat. Cook gently, stirring constantly, for a minute or two, just until the eggs have set to a creamy consistency. Let the filling cool and then correct the seasoning to taste.

To roll the cigars, cut each sheet of phyllo into three rectangles and place them together in a pile so they do not dry out. Brush each sheet with melted margarine and on each strip place a tablespoon of filling along one of the short edges. Roll the dough over the filling, tuck in the ends and then continue to roll up as you would a cigar.

The cigars may be cooked by deep frying until they are golden brown or brushed with melted margarine and baked in an oven that has been preheated to 150°C until golden brown. Serve piping hot. Serves six to eight.

SPANOKOPITA

A traditional Greek recipe

1 kilo spinach, washed and picked over
2 Tbsp. olive oil
1/2 cup butter, melted
125 gr. Gruyere or other Swiss-style cheese, grated
1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, grated (can use kashkaval cheese)
salt and pepper to taste
100 gr. phyllo pastry leaves

Shake off as much water from the spinach as possible. In a heavy skillet, heat the olive oil and 2 Tbsp. of the butter and in this saute the spinach, covered, over a high flame, until steam appears. Reduce the flame and simmer until the spinach is tender (5-6 minutes). With a slotted spoon, remove the spinach from the skillet and chop coarsely. Return to the skillet and season to taste with salt and pepper.

In a small mixing bowl combine the cheeses, spring onions and salt and pepper to taste. Add this mixture to the spinach and mix well. Butter a square casserole dish or cake tin and in the bottom place 6 leaves of the phyllo dough. Brush the top of each leaf with butter before covering with the next leaf.

Over these spread the prepared spinach and cheese mixture. Cover this with 6 more leaves of the dough, again buttering the leaves and also buttering the top. Be sure that the edges of the pastry are well buttered and bake in an oven that has been preheated to 180°C for 30-40 minutes.

Remove from the oven, let cool for 5 minutes and invert on a baking dish. Return to the oven until the top is crisp and golden-brown (about 10 minutes). Serve hot or at room temperature. Serves four to six.

BAKLAVA

1/4 kilo phyllo dough leaves
2 cups pistachio nuts, chopped coarsely
1/2 cup almonds, chopped
2 1/2 cups sugar
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
2 cups unsalted butter, melted
3/4 cup honey
juice of 1 large lemon
3 slices each orange and lemon rind
2 cinnamon sticks
4 whole cloves

In a mixing bowl, combine the pistachio nuts, almonds, 6 Tbsp. of the sugar and the ground cinnamon. Mix well. In a lightly greased baking pan, about the size of the phyllo leaves, place 12 sheets of phyllo, brushing every other sheet with the melted butter.

On this, spread 1/3 of the nut mixture and then lay on 6 more phyllo sheets, buttering each. Distribute another 1/3 of the nut mixture on this and again cover with 6 phyllo sheets, buttering each. On these distribute the final 1/3 of the nut mixture.

Cover with 8-12 phyllo sheets, buttering every other sheet. With a sharp, wet knife, cut the baklava into diamond-shaped pieces.

Heat the remaining butter until it begins to brown and pour over the baklava. Sprinkle the top with a few drops of water and place in an oven that has been preheated to 180°C for 30 minutes. Reduce the oven heat to 170°C and bake for 1 hour longer.

In a large skillet combine the remaining sugar with the honey, lemon juice, fruit rinds, cinnamon sticks and cloves. Add 2 cups of water and then heat over a low flame, stirring constantly, until the mixture boils.

Remove immediately from the heat. Allow to cool, remove the cinnamon sticks and cloves and then pour the liquids over the baklava when it is fully baked. Serve warm or at room temperature. Yields 24-30 portions.

MATTERS OF TASTE

HAIM SHAPIRO

Farm Restaurant, Herbi Farm on Mt. Glibos, near Jezreel Junction.

11 p.m. Closed Sundays. (Not kosher.)

One of my rules is never to eat in a restaurant with a view. Another of my rules is to ignore all rules, and in this case I am very happy I did so. To say that the view from the slope of Mt. Glibos is fantastic would be an understatement, especially on a summer evening when the sun sets as you eat dinner. The only problem is the restaurant is so out of the way it prints a map on its business cards.

The restaurant itself is an impressive log building with log tables, paper place mats, and bunches of dried herbs hanging from the rafters. There is a large outdoor balcony, and the service was particularly prompt and courteous.

Since the place map, which gives a history of the farm, mentioned that the proprietors made their own dried tomatoes, I ordered this as one of the main courses. Served in a bowl of olive oil, these tomatoes seemed to have the concentrated flavor and sweetness of perfect, sun-dried tomatoes, with none of the acidity one often finds in commercially bottled dried tomatoes.

Very soon I abandoned the phyllo and herb bites, which had been served with our hot wine, and instead turned to the delicious tomato-wine salad. The pistachio and salty black olives which had appeared before we ordered the phyllo were perfect for the tomatoes.

We ended the meal with a dish of lamb, succotani, eggplant and pepper marinated in olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Here the vibrant aroma of thyme complemented the sweetness of the onion and the vinegar.

Thinking of the next week to Herbi, we ordered a chicken and lamb main course. The chicken was served with a sprig of oregano.

For my main course I turned to the phyllo and ordered a fillet steak with roasted and sautéed vegetables. The steak was indeed a superb piece of meat, well browned on the outside and tender in the middle. The vegetables were also excellent, but very delicious nevertheless.

My companion and I asked for a dessert. The waiter had been seated with baskets of fruit, only providing lemon and apple, leaving the main courses. Both main courses came with perfectly cooked rice pilaf and a mixture of fresh vegetables.

We were not really in any condition for dessert, but we did have an almond pudding, which the chef creamed and was well balanced by bits of cranberry and raisins.

At the waitress's suggestion, we finished our meal with a hot tea. The tea was indeed a superb piece of meat, well browned on the outside and tender in the middle. The vegetables were also excellent, but very delicious nevertheless.

TASTE'S CHOICE

Summer Fun



E-LEE produces educational materials including matching games, memory games, puzzles and rhyming games.

In the days when we were purchasing playthings for our daughters, we assiduously avoided those marked "educational game." These tended to be pretentious or boring, or both.

If I had to name the one game from which our children learned most, it would probably be Trivial Pursuit, which carries no such slogan.

This came to mind at the start of the school holidays when I received a press release suggesting a certain company's educational playthings for parents to buy for summer vacation time.

I'm referring in particular to a game comprised of wood-like plastic rods made by Palda of Kfar Ruppin, which states boldly on the cover "Suited to the syllabus of kindergartens, in accordance with the learning program of the Ministry of Education."

Called Sogrim Heshbon ("closing the account"), the game is based on colored rods of different lengths, aimed at demonstrating math concepts in concrete form. Such rods have long been used in arithmetic classes in the primary grades; they're called *b'didim* in Hebrew.

But for summer vacation fun? Kids can, of course, play a game with Palda's Sogrim Heshbon rods - two games, in fact. A spinning dial shows each player which color rod to take from the pile. In one version, players must fill up rulers with the correct lengths of rods. In another, players build rectangles with the rods.

I'm not quite sure how playing these games will teach kids anything about the numerical values of the different length rods (one to 10), but they will learn to identify their relative lengths according to color.

Sogrim Heshbon is for children aged three and up, and its list price is NIS 59. Palda also has sets of geometric shapes for educational play.

AT A pre-Pessah toy fair, I first made the acquaintance of another manufacturer of educational materials and games, and was very impressed with the variety and quality of its goods.

To the general public, it is a relatively unknown entity, though E-LEE has existed for six years, in Netanya's old industrial zone.

What first caught my eye were E-LEE's colorful wall charts, made of transparent polycarbonate (a flexible plastic), with silk-screen prints. My personal favorite is

Whether educational or just plain fun, a new range of games promises to conquer the summer boredom blues.

By Martha Meisels

a calendar of the Days of Creation, in which you flip over the pages to add the elements created each day of the week. It comes with Hebrew or English text, for about NIS 40.

Equally attractive are weather charts and anatomical charts suitable for kindergarten and the early grades, available in Hebrew and other languages. The weather chart, for instance, is exported in English, Spanish and Russian.

E-LEE exports both to general and Jewish markets abroad. For the latter, it has learning materials and games related to the Jewish holidays and customs. Not specifically Orthodox, Conservative or Reform, they are suitable for most streams of Judaism, except perhaps the haredi. Girls are pictured in skirts, boys with hats.

If anything, I found the Jewish material a little too traditional - not so much in content, but in design. In matching and memory games, for instance, the scenes from Israel are very conventional both in their subject and depiction - the Western Wall, the Knesset, the Tower of David, etc. I have the same reservation about the illustrations relating to the Jewish holidays: they seem to belong to an earlier era.

Perhaps this is E-LEE's perception of what Jewish communities abroad want. In any case, the Jewish Agency was sufficiently impressed to invite E-LEE as the only commercial firm to participate in a recent workshop in Belgium for the encouragement of Hebrew teaching.

For local Israeli audiences, the learning games of a general nature will probably have more appeal. These are also more modern and attractive in design.

The company's material is aimed at children from one to eight, including children with various learning disabilities. The firm, which makes everything itself from start to finish, is headed by a husband-and-wife team.

E-LEE Barak, after whom it is named, is a teacher, specializing in teaching through games, both to very young children and to

children with handicaps. Meir Barak's expertise is silk-screen printing.

E-LEE's games are intended to teach motor skills, coordination, memory, language skills, and more. There are about 200 games, and all are made of washable, non-toxic polycarbonate, decorated using the silk-screen technique.

"They are games, not lessons," insists sales manager Merav Klo. "But the child is encouraged to learn, because if he learns well, he will succeed more at the game."

There are matching games, memory games, puzzles and rhyming games. There is even a series of games on the theme of peace, liberally decorated with doves. Prices range from NIS 15 to NIS 95.

Hypertony, Mama Yokero and Shilav are among the chains which carry E-LEE products locally. Instructions are in Hebrew, but English instructions can be obtained from the company on request. Many of its games are also available in Arabic for the Arab sector.

Any parent who is interested in seeing a demonstration of the company's wares can host a Tupperware-style party for eight or more friends and neighbors anywhere in the country. All you have to do is notify E-LEE at least a week in advance, at (09) 622208 or (09) 622917.

If you want the Jewish-content games to be demonstrated at the party, as well as the more general type, you should specify when ordering. On request, demonstrations can be held in English rather than Hebrew. The host receives two gifts, whether anything is sold or not.

The company has just begun a new project: subscription sales of games. Parents can sign up for a monthly or bimonthly subscription, with prices pegged to the age of the child and number of games desired.

A subscription for ages one and two, with six games, costs NIS 190. For ages three and four, there are two series of six games each, at NIS 200 per series - or NIS 380 if you sign up for both.

For ages five and six, a six-game series

costs NIS 275, while a seven-item set - including the Creation and ABC calendar - runs NIS 305. Again, there is a discount price of NIS 550 for ordering both.

Prices include postage. For further details, contact the above phone numbers.

IF YOU think that summer is just for having fun, there are plenty of new games and toys on the market for that too.

Spears Games are now being imported (importers), and one of the first to arrive sounds like pure play with no redeeming educational feature - unless you're in training to be an elephant.

In the English original, it's called Doh-Nutters, and the Hebrew title is D'hot et Ha'af ("shove your nose").

Each child gets an elephant mask of a different color and has to pick up matching colored rings (i.e. donuts) on the trunk. The game reportedly starts to get difficult when the trunk starts to fill up. For two to four players, from age four, at a retail price of NIS 69.

For sheer eye-appeal, my prize of the season goes to Playskool, the youngest division of Hasbro Toys, for its Cream-a-Flower assembly kit for the nursery school set, aged two to five.

The box contains 33 brightly colored pieces - flowerpots, stems, leaves, and petals - so that children can compose their own plastic flowers. This is meant to challenge the imagination and help develop fine motor skills, the promoters say.

Besides, it looks like fun. Making this garden grow, however, will cost parents NIS 85.

Lego, move over. Better Blocks have arrived from Down Under. These new plastic construction elements are Lego-like, but softer and more flexible. As a result, it's possible to make rounded constructions from them, or ornaments to wear in the hair or around the neck. There are even Better Blocks which glow in the dark.

Better Blocks are the patented invention of an Australian engineer, and are manufactured in New Zealand, where they have reportedly captured 10 percent of the market for interlocking building blocks. In the US, they received a Parents' Choice Award - one of 10 awarded annually.

In this country, the importer is Zink of Haifa (04-551712). Two varieties are sold here: a pair with 250 pieces, at NIS 85, and a pair of 200 glow-in-the-dark pieces, at NIS 99. They are available at toy shops and at Hamashbir Lazarchan. The size currently available here is suitable for children aged four and up. At a later stage, the larger Better Blocks for smaller children will also be imported.

Veteran toy brands are also not missing an opportunity to promote their wares in the summertime. The importers of Playmobil plastic figurines and accessories have set up a play area in the Jerusalem Mall, daily through August 5. Hours are 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. weekdays, 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Fridays, and 9 p.m. to 11 p.m. Saturday evenings.

There is no charge for children to play there, but parents should be forewarned that there is a sales corner, albeit at "attractive discount" prices. A colleague who shares my skepticism of so-called "educational" toys, tells me her daughter, going on 11, still plays with her Playmobil sets, Barbie dolls, Lego, and other classic just-for-fun toys.

Counter Attraction

'Nature is an enchantress who magnetizes the human spirit.' (J.B. Mozley)

By Alex Berlyne

My part in improving The Jerusalem Post's TV and cable program listings is not generally known - not even to the editors. All I did, after all, was to buy Pasi Plus which lists all the channels and the very next day the information that I'd just wasted two shekels on was suddenly available in the Post.

It never fails; I once demonstrated my helpful influence on the money market to an incredulous member of our economic staff simply by buying some foreign currency from a Japanese colleague.

"Klone," I asked this delectable creature, "have you any yen I could buy?" "I have one two-hundred yen coin," she murmured carefully. "You can have it for two-hundred-four agorot."

I told my doubting Thomas that now I owned some Japanese currency it was bound to lose value within a month. In fact - despite him calling me paranoid - the yen took a nosedive in a little less than a week. Quod erat demonstrandum.

THERE ARE innumerable witnesses who could testify that this uncanny ability to devalue any currency cannot be dismissed as a paranoiac - in fact, for many years I was so trusting and indomitably optimistic that if Eleanor Porter had ever heard of me she would have made me the hero of her books instead of Pollyanna.

Last year, a reader asked the Guardian "what is the opposite of paranoia?" Pollyanna Whittier's rather nauseating "Glad Game," her insistence that there is always something to rejoice at, seems to fit the bill.

After a lifetime's observation, however, I have come to the conclusion that my mental state has no connection to the strange influence I wield on the yen, the dollar, the pound sterling - or the Israeli shekel, for that matter. My ability to cause exchange rates to tumble is, in the truest sense of the word, physical.

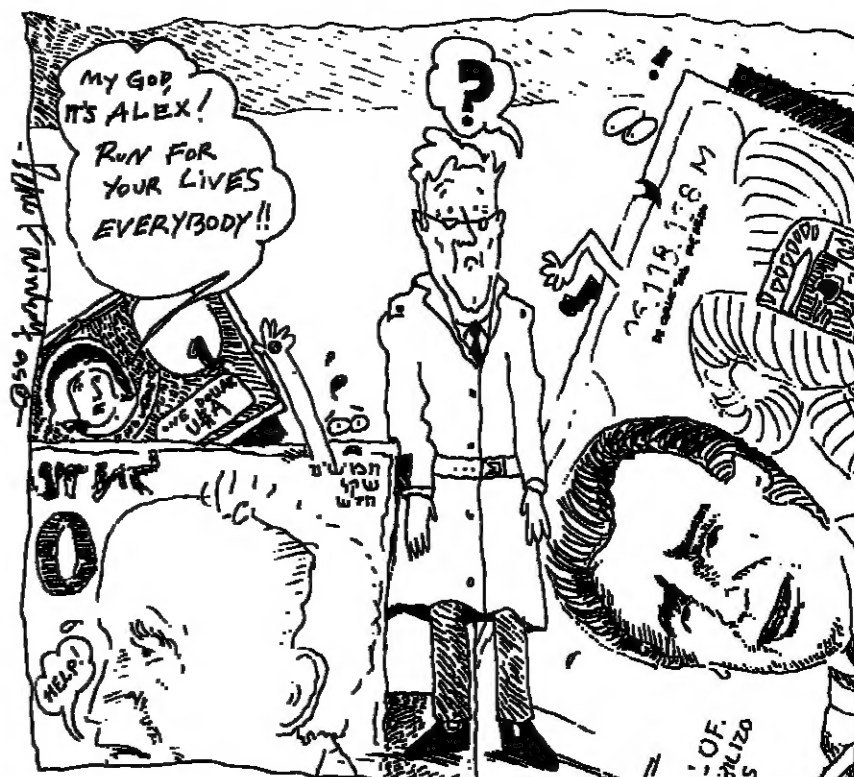
Quite simply, we all produce magnetic fields unknown to conventional physics. If you ever played about with magnets in the school physics laboratory while demonstrating the inverse square law of attraction and repulsion formulated by Charles Augustin Coulomb in 1785, you'll remember those iron filings being repelled by the lines of force emanating from the S. pole just as others swiftly converged on the N. pole.

Well, there you have it; all my life, money has simply fled from my immediate vicinity while attaching itself to other people as effortlessly as lint sticking to an angora sweater.

I CAME across the first real confirmation of my hypothesis some years ago in a reference to a "treatise on magnetism" by William Gylberde, or Gilbert, the Elizabethan who suggested that the planet Earth itself was one giant magnet. "Magnetic force," he added in De Magnete, "is animate, or imitates life; and in many things surpasses human life."

I found this theory tremendously, er, unattractive as I had very recently watched, absolutely mesmerized, a friend execute what would have been a perfect three-point turn had it not been interrupted by a nosedive into the only lamp-post on that side of the street.

Instead of making rude remarks about delusions of persecution, people should



recognize that this is possibly the biggest breakthrough in the study of magnetism since Thales of Miletus discovered mineral lodestones almost 2,600 years ago. They'll be sorry; one day Berlyne's Law will take its rightful place alongside the great discoveries of other distinguished toilers in this, or, magnetic field - the Barkhausen Effect, the Langevin Theory and the Curie Point which, I need hardly point out, refers to the temperature at which ferromagnetic material Curiously loses its magnetism.

Time will tell. After all, according to Ira Gershwin's memorable 1937 lyric, cynical neineagers have always dismissed the great innovators:

*They all laughed at Christopher Columbus
When he said the world was round;
They all laughed when Edison recorded sound.*

*They all laughed at Wilbur and his brother
When they said that man could fly;
They told Marconi
Wireless was a phony -
It's the same old cry!*

THE SAME powerful force-field undoubtedly brings people together with occupations that appropriately match their names and, incidentally, supplies the Post's readers with the endless supply of apophonyms they contribute to this column. I haven't published any recently - well, all right, not for the past 12 years or so, and anyone could mislay a file.

In order to ease slowly into this vast field of research it might be prudent to begin with only one or two categories. Admittedly, my first choice may have been influenced by the formative years I spent on Manchester's steppes and tundra where part of the staple diet was black bread and Clupea harengus. The Latin was supplied by a Hadassah Hospital consultant a few years ago when he found my blood pressure was rather low.

"Drink more coffee," he suggested, "and make sure you get plenty of salt."

"A tablespoonful of salt daily?" I asked. "That's not necessary," he said. "You could eat more pickled herring, for example."

"Pickled herring?" I was astonished. "That's a prescription?"

"All right," he conceded, terminating the proceedings, "I'll write you one for Clupea harengus."

WELL, THAT'S enough about blood pressure and, for that matter, the neat heringbone stitching I acquired in Shaare Zedek Hospital's cardiology department recently. Retortious a nos moutons or, rather, nos polissons.

The indefatigable Dov Riegler, for example, referred me to a paper in Nature magazine on the luminous mouthed shark by P.J. Herring and followed this up with a note from New Scientist on the Conservative MP for Hertfordshire who had demanded that the BC's Council of Ministers should control excessive fishing on the high seas. This defender of the Atlantic salmon was called Marlon Roe.

Some contributors must remain anonymous simply because their signatures were indecipherable. One of these supplied me with information about a World War II Lt.-General, Sir Edward Herring KCMG, KBE, DSO, MC, etc., etc., who for obvious reasons was usually known as Ned Herring. Had the general been employed in planning feints, bluffs, stratagems or diversions, my correspondent suggested, he would surely have been called Red Herring.

Another calligraphically-challenged reader recently sent me a British Channel 4 TV listing including a series called Screaming Reels. One segment, which included a feature on "how to stay married though hooked on fishing," was presented by Nick Fisher.

Bruno Wasserthell, a veteran snapper-up of unconsidered trifles, walked off with the Oscar for this category, however, when he wrote from farthest California to tell me about the marriage of Count Bismarck to an American beauty queen, Liz Herring. "The Bismarck-Herring wedding not only made headlines on the Society pages," he added, "but also raised expectant eyebrows at

Zabar's, where doubtless there was great anticipation of the issue coming forth from this fortuitous union."

You could call it animal magnetism.

SOME MONTHS ago, a rather long-winded ad in the "Strictly Personal" columns of New York magazine offered \$100,000 to anyone who could find this particular Mr. Lonelyheart a mate. Of course, my magnetic S. Pole automatically precludes me from collecting the reward but I have been examining the possibility of getting myself de-gaussed, the wartime method of reversing the polarity of the permanent magnetic field of ships' hulls to protect them against mines.

While daydreaming over the "Strictly Personal" column, however, I was surprised to note how often other advertisers described life with their ideal spouses in, er, mouth-watering terms that outdid Cole Porter's:

It's delightful, it's delicious, it's delectable.

"Chicken Soup," for example, was looking for a single Jewish male "for a delicious taste of life together," while "How are you at Chopping Onions?" announced she was seeking "a warm-hearted kitchen compadre." A slightly different approach, headed "Cholent Versus Sushi," was placed by a "blue-eyed, Waspy, Jewish professional" who was seeking a "down-to-earth" Jewish girl - presumably one full of beans. The least likely to succeed, I believe, began "Couch Potato Seeks Spud."

The advertiser described herself as a "nonworkaholic professional woman" who wished to meet a man who "wants to share life's fun, frustrations and the remote control."

This sort of thing, it seems to me, can only lead to disillusion and an unavoidable decision to switch from New York to Slimming magazine though, even there, Fings Ain't What They Used to Be. The last issue I saw, sent in by a contributor whose name seems to have become detached, despite it having lain undisturbed for more than a decade, had a rather disturbing masthead. This listed the chief sub-editor as Elizabeth Eaton, the sales executive as Sue Sweetman, the deputy editor as Sybil Greatbatch and the editor as Patience Bulkeley.

NEVERTHELESS, I remain convinced that it pays to advertise, especially if you can offer \$100,000 as an inducement to amateur matchmakers. After all, not all marriages are made in heaven even though some seem to be, well, predestined.

My niece Linda Kovler, of Kibbutz Alumim, once informed me that her friend's mother had had a music teacher called Miss Throstle and that she had been taught biology by a Miss Boddy. The friend in question was the delectable Melanie Bagel and while I was combing through the Strictly Personals I came across an article in New York magazine which supplied me with the perfect match for Melanie or for her sister Elizabeth, one that must have been made in some delightful deli-heaven.

Both the Bagels, however, are already spoken for. Otherwise I would have taken great pleasure in introducing them to the Port Authority police lieutenant mentioned in the article "whose name tag reads A. Pretzel."